

**The Hindu Philosophy of Life, Ethics and Religion**

**OM-TAT-SAT**

# **ŚRIMADBHAGAVAD GĪTĀ RAHASYA**

**OR**

## **KARMA-YOGA-ŚĀSTRA**

Including an external examination of the Gītā, the original Sanskrit stanzas, their English translations, commentaries on the stanzas, and a comparison of Eastern with Western doctrines etc.

**BAL GANGADHAR TILAK, B.A., LL.B.,**

**Translated by:**

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**[Hindikosh]**

Title: Shrimad Bhagavadgita Rahasya or Karma Yoga Shastra

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Translator: Bhalchandra Sitaram Sukthankar

Release Date: 10 May 2020

Edition: 1.0

Language: English

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By

**BAL GANGADHAR TILAK, B.A., LL.B.,**

Law Lecturer, and Pleader, Poona; Sometime additional member of the council of H.E. The Governor of Bombay for making laws, Author of *Orion or Research into the Antiquity of the Vedas*, *Artic Home in the Vedas*, *Vedanga Jyotish* and *Vedic chronology*, Founder of the '*Kesari*' and the Maratha newspaper etc. Etc.

Translated by  
**Bhalchandra Sitaram Sukthankar,**  
**M.A., LL.B.,**

**First edition ( VOLUME I & II ), 1935.**

Published by R. B. Tilak, Lokamanya, Tilak Mandir, 568,  
Narayan Peth, Poona City, (INDIA).

Printed by S. V. Parulekar at the Bombay Vaibhav Press,  
Servants of India Society's Building, Sandhurst Road, Bombay,  
(INDIA).

**Works of the Late LOK. B. G. TILAK.**

1. The Arctic Home in the Vedas (In English).
2. The Orion, or Researches into the Antiquity of the Vedas (In English).
3. The Vedic Chronology and the Vedanga Jyotisha (In English).
4. THE GĪTĀ-RAHASYA.  
Marathi, in two volumes.

Gujarathi, (cloth bound) in one volume.

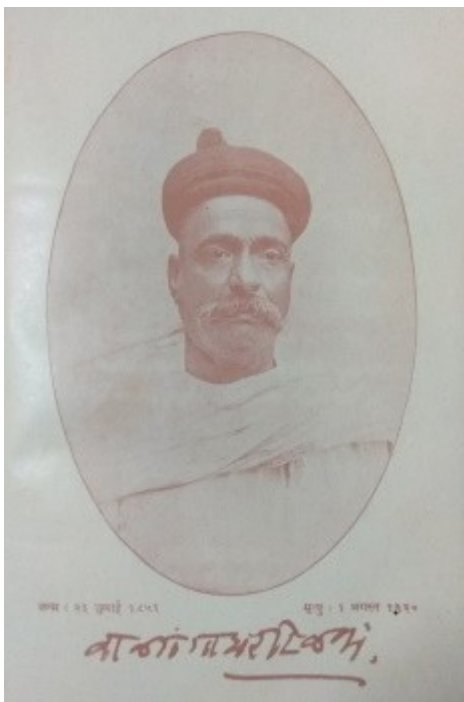
Hindi, " ditto.

Kanarese, " ditto.

Bengali, " ditto.

5. Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā, text, translation and important, commentaries, in Hindi, Gujarathi, and Marathi.

# LOKMANYA BAL GANGADHAR TILAK



(1856 – 1920.)

# **PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD (FIRST EDITION).**

Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the author of the present work, had intended to publish an English translation of his work in order to give it an international circulation, which it would necessarily not have in its Marathi form as originally written out by him. It was his great ambition that the interpretation put by him on the doctrine preached by the Bhagavadgītā, should come before the eyes of learned philosophers, scholars, and alumni, all the world over, so that he could have the benefit of their views on the line of argument and interpretation adopted by him; and he had in his life-time made an attempt to get the work put into the English language. He was, however, unable to see this matter through on account of his numerous activities, and ultimately he suddenly fell ill and died, without seeing the realisation of his desire and ambition.

After his demise, we his two sons, as the publishers of his works, tried to carry out this his wish, but were unable to give the matter our whole-hearted attention, owing to being involved in heavy litigation arising out of the chaos resulting from the unfair advantage which certain interested parties took of his death. We spent a large sum of money in trying to

get the work translated into English, but in spite of this expense, the matter remained incomplete; and in the meantime one of us, viz., my brother, Shridhar died, leaving this task unfinished. I am, therefore, now glad to announce that I have at last been able to successfully carry out the most cherished wish of my father, as also of my brother, and am publishing this volume on 1st August 1935, being the fifteenth anniversary of my father's death; and I shall feel that all the trouble which has been taken by me in bringing out this publication will be more than amply rewarded, if it gets into international circulation, and if I am thus enabled to fulfil the wishes of my late father, and brother; for, I shall then feel that I am free from my obligations to the deceased. I am writing this foreword on the seventh anniversary of my brother's death and I am dedicating this publication to his memory.

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I am grateful to the various photographers, photographs taken by whom are reproduced in this publication; as also to the eminent writers and the publishers of works containing references to the Gītā, the Gītā-Rahasya, and to my late father, extracts from whose publications or writings, have been included in this publication.

My thanks are also due to a friend whose help was greatly responsible for this publication seeing the light of the day, and



especially to Mr. A. V. Patvardhan, a member of the Servants of India Society, and the Manager of the Arya- Bhushan Press, Poona, who, out of regard for the late Lokamanya Tilak, undertook the printing of this work at the Bombay Vaibhava Press, without asking for any advance payment, and has agreed to receive all charges payable to the Press out of the sale proceeds of the book. In fact, but for this most generous accommodation, it would have been difficult for me to undertake and carry out such an expensive and ambitious project, at least in my present circumstances, . I must also here acknowledge my gratitude to the Translator Mr. B. S. Sukthankar, who also has gladly consented to receive the amount payable to him for the translation, out of the sale proceeds of the book, in due course.

It is true that the price of the publication has been put a little high for moderate purses, as also that I have had to publish the book in two volumes, so as to partly meet the costs of the Press out of the sale proceeds of the first volume; but this has been done as there was no alternative course left to me.

Nevertheless, I have not made this division arbitrarily, as will appear from what follows. The book consists of two unequal parts, as written, the first part being the Philosophical Exposition, consisting of fifteen chapters and Appendices, and going over the first 588 pages of the original text, and the second consisting of the Gītā, with its translation, and the Commentary on such translation, stanza by stanza, which goes over about 360 pages. In publishing the book in two volumes I

have included the first thirteen chapters of the Philosophical Exposition in the first volume, and chapters 14 and 15 of the

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Philosophical Exposition, and the Appendices together with the indices in the second volume, for the following reasons:-

(i) With the thirteenth chapter, the Exposition proper, comes to an end; the three remaining chapters, though an integral part of the Exposition, respectively contain only (a) an explanation about the continuity of the chapters of the Gītā, (b) the Summing up, or resume, and (c) the Appendices; so that strictly speaking, the subject-matter does not suffer by my division (see the last words of the Author at the end of the thirteenth chapter, on p. 618).

(ii) In writing the book itself, the late Lokamanya wrote chapters I to VIII in one book, chapters IX to XIII, in the second book; chapters XIV and XV, and the External Examination (Appendices), and the translation of the first three Adhyāyas (chapters) of the Gītā in the third book; and the translation of the Adhyāyas four to eighteen of the Gītā and his Preface in the fourth book (see, Information regarding the original manuscript of the Gītā-Rahasya printed at p. xxviii following); thus, the first Volume as now published contains a translation of the subject-matter included in the first two books written by the Author.

(iii) The Volumes, as now published are more or less of the same size and price, so that from the point of view of the purchaser, it is easier for him to pay the purchase price of the whole book in two, more or less equal instalments, at different times. If the first Volume had been made to include the fifteen chapters and the Appendices, its price would have been much higher than as now fixed.

I have, however, implicit trust in the inherent spiritual power of this wonderful and well-known work of a recognised Oriental Scholar and Researcher, which enabled the first ten thousand copies of the Marathi publication to be sold off within a few months of its publication, and enabled it to go into several editions in Marathi, and to be translated into half a dozen Indian vernaculars; and I am sure that the same success will be met with by the present English translation.

Not only has the translator, Mr. B. S. Sukthankar, helped me by not putting any financial pressure on me, but he has put the translation through within a comparatively short space of

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time after it had been entrusted to him, by dint of untiring energy, in spare time, in spite of the numerous other taxes on his time and labour, apart from his professional work as an Attorney-at-Law, which ties him down most part of the day to his office; and he has put me under further obligations by

personally carefully examining all the proofs. He has also to a certain extent given me financial accommodation for meeting such payments as had to be met in advance; and I may without exaggeration say that but for his sympathy accommodation, enthusiasm, and help, it would have been difficult for me to bring out the present edition. A grateful mention must also be made of Dr. V. S. Sukthankar, of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona, for the valuable help given by him in looking into the transliterated Sanskrit portions of the work, and making such valuable suggestions regarding the publication, as a man of his qualifications alone could make on account of his Continental experience of publications of similar works.

Last, but not least, my sincere thanks are due to Mr. B. M. Sidhaye, the Manager of the Bombay Vaibhav Press, who has ungrudgingly spared no pains to make the technical and difficult printing of this book as faultless and satisfactory as possible; and but for whose obliging help it would not have been possible to put this work through the press during that short space of time in which it has been actually printed.

I feel that in quoting this stanza, with which I am ending this Foreword, I am only voicing sentiments similar to those expressed by my revered father in the concluding remarks of his, Preface to the original Marathi work, in parting with his precious thoughts and placing them into the hands of his readers:—

"Go little book from this my solitude;

"I cast thee on the water, go thy ways;  
"And if, as I believe, thy tone be good,  
"The world will find thee, after many days".

(Southey)

~ R. B. TILAK, Publisher.

Bombay, 25th May 1935.

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# **PROMINENT PERSONALITIES ON THE GĪTĀ, MR. TILAK, AND THE 'GĪTĀ-RAHASYA.**

## **1. SWAMI VIVEKANAND.**

The Gita is a bouquet composed of the beautiful flowers of spiritual truths collected from the Upanishads.

## **2. Dr. ANNIE BESANT**

Among the priceless teachings that may be found in the great Hindu poem of the Mahabharata, there is none so rare and precious as this, "The Lord's Song". Since it fell from the divine lips of Shri Krishna on the field of battle, and stilled the surging emotions of his disciple and friend, how many troubled hearts has it quieted and strengthened, how many weary souls has it led to Him. It is meant to lift the aspirant from the lower levels of renunciation, where objects are renounced, to the loftier heights, where desires are dead, and where the Yogi dwells in calm and ceaseless contemplation while his body and mind are actively employed in discharging the duties that fall to his lot in

life. That the spiritual man need not be a recluse, that union with the divine Life may be achieved and maintained in the midst of worldly affairs, that the obstacles to that union lie, not outside us, but within us, such is the central lesson of the BHAGAVAD-GITA.

It is a scripture of Yoga: now Yoga is literally Union; and it means harmony with the Divine Law, the becoming one with the Divine Life, by the subdual of all outward-going energies. To reach this, balance must be gained, as also equilibrium, so that self, joined to the Self, shall not be affected by pleasure or pain, desire or aversion, or any of the "pairs of opposites", between which untrained selves swing backwards and forwards. Moderation is, therefore, the key-note of the Gita and the harmonising of all the constituents of man, till they vibrate in perfect attunement with the One, the Supreme Self. This is the aim the disciple is to set before him. He must learn not to be attracted by the attractive, nor repelled by the repellent, but must see both as manifestations of the one

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Lord, so that they may be lessons for his guidance, not fetters for his bondage. In the midst of turmoil, he must rest in the Lord of Peace, discharging every duty to the fullest, not because he seeks the results of his actions, but because it is his duty to perform them. His heart is an altar; love to his Lord,

the flame burning upon it; all his acts, physical and mental, are sacrifices offered on the altar, and once offered, he has with them no further concern.

As though to make the lesson more impressive, it was given on a field of battle. Arjuna, the warrior-prince, was to vindicate his brother's title, to destroy a usurper who was oppressing the land; it was his duty as prince, as warrior, to fight for the deliverance of his nation and to restore order and peace. To make the contest more bitter, loved comrades and friends stood on both sides, wringing his heart with personal anguish, and making the conflict of duties as well as physical strife. Could he slay those to whom he owed love and duty, and trample on ties of kindred? To break family ties was a sin; to leave the people in cruel bondage was a sin; where was the right way? Justice must be done, else law would be disregarded; but how slay without sin? The answer is the burden of the book: Have no personal interest in the event; carry out the duty imposed by the position in life, realise that Ishvara, at once Lord and Law, is the doer, working out the mighty evolution that ends in bliss and peace; be identified with Him by devotion, and then perform duty as duty, fighting without passion or desire, without anger or hatred; thus Activity forges no bonds, Yoga is accomplished, and the Soul is free.

Such is the obvious teaching of this sacred book. But as all the acts of an Avatāra are symbolical, we may pass from the outer to the inner planes, and see in the fight of Kurukshetra the



battle-field of the Soul, and in the sons of Dhritarashtra, enemies it meets in its progress; Arjuna becomes the type of the struggling Soul of the disciple, and Shri Krishna is the Logos of the Soul. Thus, the teaching of the ancient battle- field gives guidance in all later days, and trains the aspiring soul in treading the steep and thorny path that leads to peace.

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To all such, souls in the East and West come these divine lessons; for the path is one, though it has many names, and all Souls seek the same goal, though they may not realise their unity.

(From Mrs. Besant's Pocket Gita published by G. A . Natesan & Co. Madras.)

### **3. PT. MADAN MORAN MALAVIYA.**

I believe that in the whole history of mankind, the greatest outstanding personality having the deepest and the most profound knowledge and possessing super-human powers is Shri Krishna. I further believe that in all the living languages of the world, there is no book so full of truth knowledge, and yet so handy as the *Bhagavadgita*.

This wonderful book of eighteen small chapters contains the essence of the Vedas and the Upanishads, and is a sure guide of the way to perfect happiness, here as well as hereafter. It preaches the three-fold way of Knowledge, Action, and Devotion, leading to the highest good of mankind. It brings to men the highest knowledge, the purest love and the most luminous action. It teaches self-control, the threefold austerity, non-violence, truth, compassion, obedience to the call of duty for the sake of duty, and putting up a fight Against unrighteousness (Adharma).

Full of knowledge and truth and moral teaching, it has the power to raise men from the lowest depths of ignorance and suffering to the highest glories of divine beings. To my knowledge, there is no book in the whole range of the world's literature so high above all as the Bhagavadgita, which is a treasure-house of Dharma, not only for Hindus but for all mankind. Several scholars of different countries have by study of this book acquired a pure and perfect knowledge of the Supreme Being Who is responsible for the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe, and have gained a stainless, desireless, supreme devotion to His feet. Those men and women are very fortunate who have got this little lamp of light full of an inexhaustible quantity of the oil of love, showing the way out of the darkness and ignorance of the world. It is incumbent on such people to use it for all. mankind groping in the darkness.

#### **4. SIR VALENTINE CHIROL.**

There is no more beautiful book in the sacred literature of the Hindus; there is none in which the more enlightened find greater spiritual comfort.

It was a Hindu gentleman and a Brahmin who told me that if I wanted to study the psychology of the Indian unrest, I should begin by studying Tilak's career. "Tilak's onslaught in Poona upon Ranade, his alliance with the bigots of orthodoxy, his appeals to popular superstition in the new Ganapati celebrations, to racial fanaticism in the 'Anti-Cow-Killing movement', to Mahratta sentiment in the cult which he introduced of Shivaji, his active propaganda amongst school-boys and students, his gymnastic societies, his preaching in favour of physical training, and last but not least his control of the Press, and the note of personal violence which he imparted to newspaper polemics, represent the progressive stages of a highly-organised campaign which has served as a model to the apostles of unrest all over India". This was a valuable piece of advice, for, if any one can claim to be truly the father of Indian unrest, it is Bal Gangadhar Tilak.

(From Indian Unrest by Sir Valentine Chirol.)

#### **5. HON'BLE G. K. GOKHALE.**

Tilak's natural endowments are first-rate. He has used them for the service of the country and although I did not approve of his methods, I never questioned his motives. There is no man who has suffered so much for the country, who has had in his life to contend against powerful opposition so much as Tilak; and there is no man who has shown grit, patience and courage so rare, that several times he lost his fortune and by his indomitable will gathered it together again.

(From Dnyan-Prakash dated 3 – 2 – 1915).

## **6. MAHATMA M. K. GANDHI.**

Early in my childhood I had felt the need of a scripture that would serve me as an unfailing guide through the trials and temptations of life. The Vedas could not supply that need, if only because to learn them would require fifteen to sixteen years of hard study at a place like Kashi, for which

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I was not ready then. But the Gita, I had read somewhere, gave within the compass of its 700 verses the quintessence of all the Shastras and the Upanishads. That decided me. I learnt Sanskrit to enable me to read the Gita. To-day the Gita is not

only my Bible or my Koran; it is more than that – it is my mother. I lost my earthly mother who gave me birth long ago; but this eternal mother has completely filled her place by my side ever since. She has never changed, she has never failed me. When I am in difficulty or distress, I seek refuge in her bosom.

It is sometimes alleged against the Gita that it is too difficult a work for the man in the street. The criticism, I venture to submit, is ill-founded. If you find all the eighteen chapters too difficult to negotiate, make a careful study of the first three chapters only. They will give you in a nutshell what is propounded in greater detail and from different angles in the remaining fifteen chapters.

Even these three chapters can be further epitomised in a few verses that can be selected from these chapters. Add to this the fact that at three distinct places, the Gita goes even further and exhorts us to leave alone all 'isms' and take refuge in the Lord alone, and it will be seen how baseless is the charge that the message of the Gita is too subtle or complicated for lay minds to understand.

The Gita is the universal mother. She turns away nobody. Her door is wide open to anyone who knocks. A true votary of the Gita does not know what disappointment is. He ever dwells in perennial joy and peace that passeth understanding. But that peace and joy come not to the sceptic or to him who is proud of his intellect or learning. It is reserved only for the humble in spirit who brings to her worship a full-ness of faith and an

undivided singleness of mind. There never was a man who worshipped her in that spirit and went back disappointed.

The Gita inculcates the duty of perseverance in the face of seeming failure. It teaches us that we have a right to actions only but not to the fruit thereof, and that success and failure are one and the same thing at bottom. It calls upon

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us to dedicate ourselves, body, mind and soul, to pure duty, and not to become mental voluptuaries at the mercy of all chance desires and undisciplined impulses. As a "Satyagrahi", I can declare that the Gita is ever presenting me with fresh lessons. If somebody tells me that this is my delusion, my reply to him would be that I shall hug this delusion as my richest treasure.

I would advise everyone to begin the day with an early morning recitation of the Gita. Take up the study of the Gita not in a carping or critical spirit, but in a devout and reverent spirit. Thus approached, she will grant your every wish. Once you have tasted of its sweet nectar, your attachment to it will grow from day to day. The recitation of the Gita verses will support you in your trials and console you in your distress, even in the darkness of solitary confinement. And, if with these verses on your lips you receive the final summons and

deliver up your spirit, you will attain 'Brahma-Nirvāṇa,' the Final Liberation.

The Gita enabled the late Lokamanya Tilak out of his encyclopaedic learning and study, to produce a monumental, commentary. For him it was a store-house of profound truths to exercise his intellect upon. I believe his commentary on the Gita will be a more lasting monument to his memory. It will survive even the successful termination of the struggle for Swarajya. Even then his memory will remain as fresh as ever on account of his spotless purity of life and his great commentary on the Gita. No one in his life time, nor even, now, could claim deeper and vaster knowledge of the Shastras than he possessed. His masterwork commentary on the Gita is unsurpassed and will remain so for a long time to come. Nobody has yet carried on more elaborate research in the questions arising from the Gita and the Vedas."

Paying a glowing tribute to the memory of the Late Lokamanya Tilak, Gandhiji said "his vast learning, his immense sacrifices and his life-long service have won for him a unique place in the hearts of the people".

(From Speeches of Mahatma Gandhi at Benares and at Cawnpore).

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## **7. BABU AUROVINDO GHORE.**

What is the message of the Gita and what its working value, its spiritual utility to the human mind of the present day, after the long ages that have elapsed since it was written and the great subsequent transformation's of thought and experience? The human mind moves always forward, alters its view-point and enlarges its thought-substance, and the effect of these changes is to render past systems of thinking obsolete or, when they are preserved, to extend, to modify and subtly or visibly to alter their value. The vitality of an ancient doctrine consists in the extent to which it naturally lends itself to such a treatment; for that means that whatever may have been the limitations or the obsolescences of the form of its thought, the truth of substance, the truth of living vision and experience on which its system was built, is still sound and retains a permanent validity and significance. The Gita is a book that has worn extraordinarily well, and it is almost as fresh and still in its real substance quite as new, because always renewable in experience, as when it first appeared in or was written into the frame of the 'Mahabharata'. It is still received in India as one of the great bodies of doctrine that most authoritatively govern religious thinking; and its teaching is acknowledged as of the highest value if not wholly accepted, by almost all shades of religious belief and opinion. Its influence is not merely philosophic or academic but immediate and living, an influence both for thought and action, and its ideas are actually at work as a powerful shaping factor in the revival and renewal of a



nation and a culture. It has even been said recently by a great voice that all we need of spiritual truth for the spiritual life is to be found in the Gita, It would be to encourage the superstition of the book to take too literally that utterance. The truth of the spirit is infinite and cannot be circumscribed in that manner. Still it may be said that most of the main clues are there and that after all the later developments of spiritual experience and discovery, we can still return to it for a large inspiration and guidance. Outside India too it is universally acknowledged as one of the world's

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great scriptures, although in Europe its thought is better understood than its secret of spiritual practice.

Neither Mr. Tilak nor his works really require any presentation of foreword.

His Orion and his Arctic Home have acquired at once a world-wide recognition and left as strong a mark as can at all be imprinted on the ever-shifting sands of oriental research. His work on the Gita, no mere commentary, but an original criticism and presentation of ethical truths, is a monumental work, THE FIRST PRORE WRITING OF THE FRONT RANK IN WEIGHT AND IMPORTANCE IN THE MARATHI LANGUAGE, AND LIKELY TO BECOME A CLASSIC. This one book sufficiently proves that had he devoted his energies in this direction, he

might easily have filled a large place in the history of Marathi literature and in the history of ethical thought, so subtle and comprehensive in its thinking, so great the perfection and satisfying force of its style. But it was psychologically impossible for Mr. Tilak to devote his energies in any great degree to another action than the one life-mission for which the Master of his works had chosen him. His powerful literary gift has been given up to a journalistic work, ephemeral as even the best journalistic work must be, but consistently brilliant, vigorous, politically educative through decades, to an extent seldom matched and certainly never surpassed. His scholastic labour has been done almost by way of recreation. Nor can anything be more significant than the fact that the works which have brought him a fame other than that of the politician and patriot, were done in periods of compulsory cessation from his life work, – planned and partly, if not wholly, executed during the imprisonments which could alone enforce leisure upon this unresting worker for his country. Even these by-products of his genius have some reference to the one passion of his life, the renewal, if not the surpassing, of the past greatness of the nation by the greatness of its future. His Vedic researches seek to fix its pre-historic point of departure; the Gita-rahasya takes the scripture which is perhaps the strongest and most comprehensive production of Indian spirituality and justifies to that spirituality by its own authoritative ancient message the sense

of the importance of life, of action, of human existence, of man's labour for mankind which is indispensable to the idealism of the modern spirit.

Mr. Tilak himself, his career, his place in Indian politics are also a self-evident proposition, a hard fact baffling and dismaying in the last degree to those to whom his name has been anathema, and his increasing pre-eminence figured as a portent of evil. Yet is Mr. Tilak a man of various and no ordinary gifts, and in several lines of life he might have achieved present distinction or a pre-eminent and enduring fame. Though he has never practised, he has a close knowledge of law and an acute legal mind which, had he oared in the least degree for wealth and worldly position, would have brought him to the front at the bar. He is a great Sanskrit scholar, a powerful writer and a strong, subtle and lucid thinker. He might have filled a large place in the field of contemporary Asiatic scholarship. He is the very type and incarnation of the Maratha character, the Maratha qualities, the Maratha spirit, but with the unified solidity in the character, the touch of genius in the qualities, the vital force in the spirit which make a great personality readily the representative man of his people. The Maratha race, as their soil and their history have made them, are a rugged, strong and sturdy people; democratic in their every fibre; keenly intelligent and practical to the very marrow; following in ideas,

even in poetry, philosophy and religion, the drive towards life and action; capable of great fervour, feeling and enthusiasm, like all Indian people, but not emotional idealists; having in their thought and speech, always a turn for strength, sense, accuracy, lucidity and vigour; in learning and scholarship, patient, industrious, careful, thorough and penetrating; in life, simple, hardy and frugal; in their temperament, courageous, pugnacious, full of spirit, yet with a tact in dealing with hard facts and circumventing obstacles; shrewd yet aggressive diplomatists, born politicians, born fighters. All this Mr. Tilak is with a singular and eminent completeness, and all on a large scale, adding to it all a lucid simplicity and genius, a secret intensity, and; inner strength of will, a single-mindedness in aim of quite extraordinary force, which remind one of

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the brightness, sharpness and perfect temper of a fine sword hidden in a sober scabbard.

The indomitable will and the unwavering devotion have been the whole meaning of Mr. Tilak's life; they are the reason of his immense hold on the people. For he does not owe his pre-eminent position to wealth and great, social position, professional success, recognition by Government, a power of fervid oratory or of fluent and telling speech; for he had none of these things to help him. He owes it to himself alone and to

the thing his life has meant and because he has meant it with his whole mind and his whole soul. He has kept back nothing for himself or for other aims, but has given all himself to his country. As he emerged on the political field, his people saw more and more clearly in him their representative man, themselves in large, the genius of their type. They felt him to be of one spirit and make, with the great men who had made their past history, almost believed him to be a reincarnation of one of them returned to carry out his old work in a new form . and under new conditions. They beheld in him the spirit of Maharashtra once again embodied in a great individual. He occupies a position in his province which has no parallel in the rest of India.

The landmarks of Mr. Tilak's life are landmarks also in the history of his province and his country.

His first great step associated him in a pioneer work whose motive was to educate the people for a new life under the new conditions, on the one side, a purely educational movement of which the fruit was the Ferguson College, fitly founding the reawakening of the country by an effort of which co-operation in self-sacrifice was the moving spirit, on the other, the initiation of the Kesari newspaper, which figured increasingly as the characteristic and powerful expression of the political mind of Maharashtra. Mr. Tilak's career has counted three periods each of which had an imprisonment for its culminating point. His first imprisonment in the Kolhapur case belongs to this first stage of self- development and development of the

Maratha country for, new ideas and activities and for the national future.

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The second period brought in a wider conception and a profounder effort. For now it was to reawaken not only the political mind but the soul of the people by linking its future to its past; it worked by a more strenuous and popular propaganda which reached its height in the organisation of the Shivaji and the Ganapati festivals. His separation from the Social reform leader, Agarkar, had opened the way for the peculiar role which he has played as a trusted and accredited leader of conservative and religious India in the paths of democratic politics. It was this position which enabled him to effect the union of the new political spirit with the tradition and sentiment of the historic past and of both with the ineradicable religious temperament of the people of which these festivals were the symbol. The congress movement was for a long time purely occidental in its mind, character and methods, confined to the English-educated few, founded on the political rights and interests of the people read in the light of English history and European ideals, but with no roots either in the past of the country or in the inner spirit of the nation. Mr. Tilak was the first political leader to break through the routine of its somewhat academical methods, to bridge the gulf between the present and the past, and to restore

continuity to the political life of the nation. He developed a language and a spirit and he used methods which indianised the movement and brought into it the masses. To his work of this period we owe that really living, strong and readily organised movement in Maharashtra which has shown its energy and sincerity in more than one crisis and struggle. This divination of the mind and spirit of his people and its needs and this power to seize on the right way to call it forth prove strikingly the political genius of Mr. Tilak; they made him the one man predestined to lead them in this trying and difficult period when all has to be discovered and all has to be reconstructed. What was done then by Mr. Tilak in Maharashtra has been initiated for all India by the Swadeshi movement. To bring in the mass of the people, to found the greatness of the future on "the greatness of the past, to infuse Indian politics with Indian religious fervour and spirituality, are the indispensable conditions for a great and

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powerful political awakening in India. Others, writers, thinkers, spiritual leaders, had seen this truth. Mr. Tilak was the first to bring it into the actual field of practical politics; The second period of his labour for this country culminated in a longer and harsher imprisonment which was as it were the second seal of the divine hand upon his work; for there can be no diviner seal than suffering for a cause.

A third period, that the Swadeshi movement, brought Mr. Tilak forward prominently as an All-India leader; it gave him at last the wider field, the greater driving power, the larger leverage he needed to bring his life-work rapidly to head, and not only in Maharashtra but throughout the country. From the inception of the Boycott Movement to the Surat catastrophe and his last and longest imprisonment, which was its equal, the name and work of Mr. Tilak are a part of Indian history.

These three imprisonments, each showing more clearly the moral stuff and quality of the man under the test and glare of suffering, have been the three seals of his career. The first found him one of a small knot of pioneer workers; it marked him out to be the strong and inflexible leader of a strong and sturdy people. The second found him already the inspiring power of a great awakening of the Maratha spirit; it left him an uncrowned king in the Deccan and gave him that high reputation throughout India, which was the foundation-stone of his commanding influence. The last found him the leader of an All-India party, the foremost exponent and head of a thorough-going Nationalism; it sent him back to be one of the two or three foremost men of India adored and followed by the whole nation. No prominent man in India has suffered more for his country; none has taken his sacrifices and sufferings more quietly and as a matter of course.

All the Indian provinces and communities have spoken with one voice, Mr. Tilak's principles of work have been accepted; the ideas which he had so much troubled to enforce have



become the commonplaces and truisms of our political thought. The only question that remains is the rapidity of a new inevitable evolution. That is the hope for which Mr. Tilak. still stands, a leader of all India.

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Mr. Tilak's name stands already for history as a Nation-builder, one of the half-dozen greatest political personalities, memorable figures, representative men of the nation in this most critical period of India's destinies, a name to be remembered gratefully so long as the country has pride in its past and hope for its future.

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# MR. TILAK ON THE GĪTĀ- RAHASYA.

Let me begin by telling you what induced me to take up the study of Bhagvad Gita. When I was quite a boy, I was often told by my elders that strictly religious and really philosophic life was incompatible with the hum-drum life of every day. If one was ambitious enough to try to attain Moksha, the highest goal a person could attain, then he must divest himself of all earthly desires and renounce this world. One could not serve two masters, the world and God, I understood this to mean that if one would lead a life which was the life worth living, according to the religion in which I was born, then the sooner the world was given up the better. This set me thinking. The question that I formulated for myself to be solved was: Does my religion want me to give up this world and renounce it before I attempt to, or in order to be able to, attain the perfection of manhood? In my boy-hood I was also told that Bhagvad Gita was universally acknowledged to be a book containing all the principles and philosophy of the Hindu Religion, and I thought if this be so I should find an answer in this book to my query; and thus began my study of the Bhagvad Gita. I approached the book with a mind prepossessed by no previous ideas about any philosophy, and

had no theory of my own for which I sought any support in the Gita. A person whose mind is prepossessed by certain ideas, reads the book with a prejudiced mind; for instance, when a Christian reads it, he does not want to know what the Gita says but wants to find out if there are any principles in the Gita which he has already met with in the Bible, and if so the conclusion he rushes to is that the Gita was copied from the Bible. I have dealt with this topic in my book Gita Rahasya and I need hardly say much about it here, but what I want to emphasise is this, that when you want to read and understand a book, especially a great work like the Gita – you must approach it with an unprejudiced and unprepossessed mind. To do this, I know, is one of the most difficult things. Those who profess to do it may have a lurking thought or prejudice. in their minds which vitiates the reading of the book to some extent. However I am describing to you the frame of mind one must get into if

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one wants to get at the truth; and however difficult it be, at has to be done. The next thing one has to do is to take into consideration the time and the circumstances in which the book was written and the purpose for which the book was written. In short, the book must not be read devoid of its context. This is especially true about a book like Bhagvad Gita. Various commentators have put as many interpretations on

the book, and surely the writer or composer could not have written or composed the book for so many interpretations being put on it. He must have put one meaning and one purpose running through the book, and that I have tried to find out. I believe I have succeeded in it, because having no theory of mine for which I sought any support from the book so universally respected, I had no reason to twist the text to suit my theory. There has not been a commentator of the Gītā who did not advocate a pet theory of his own and has not tried to support the same by showing that the Bhagvad Gita lent him support. The conclusion I have come to is that the Gita advocates the performance of action in this world even after the actor has achieved the highest union with the Supreme Deity by Jnana (knowledge) or Bhakti (Devotion). This action must be done to keep the world going by the right path of evolution which the Creator has destined the world to follow. In order that the action may not bind the actor, it must be done with the aim of helping His purpose, and without any Attachment to the coming result. This I hold is a lesson of the Gita. Jñāna-Yoga there is, yes. Bhakti-Yoga there is, yes. Who says not? But they are both subservient to the Karma-Yoga preached in the Gita. If the Gita was preached to desponding Arjuna to make him ready for the fight – for the Action – how can it be said that the ultimate lesson of the great book is Bhakti or Jnana alone? In fact, there is a blending of all these Yogas in the Gita; and as the air is not Oxygen or Hydrogen, or

any other gas alone, but a composition of all these in a certain proportion, so in the Gita all these Yogas are blended into one. I differ from almost all the commentators when I say that the Gītā enjoins Action even after the perfection in Jñāna and

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Bhakti is attained and the Deity is reached through these mediums. Now, there is a fundamental unity underlying the Logos (Ishvara), man, and world. The world is in existence because the Logos has willed it so. It is His Will that holds it together. Man strives to gain union with God; and when this union is achieved, the individual will merge in the mighty Universal Will. When this is achieved, will the individual say: "I shall do no Action, and I shall not help the world"—the world which is, because the Will with Which he has sought union has willed it to be so? It does not stand to reason. It is not I who say so: the Gita says so. Shri Krishna himself says that there is nothing in all the three worlds that He need acquire, and still He acts. He acts because if He did not, the world will be ruined. If man seeks unity with the Deity, he must necessarily seek unity with the interests of the world also, and work for it. If he does not. then the unity is not perfect, because there is union between two elements out of the three (man and Deity) and the third (the world) is left out. I have thus solved the question for myself and I hold that serving the world, and thus serving.

His Will) is the surest way of Salvation; and this way can be followed by remaining in the world and not going away from it.

**(A summary of the speech of Mr. Tilak, re: Gītā Rahasya).**

The Karma-Yoga which I preach is not a new theory; neither was the discovery of the Law of Karma made as recently as to-day. The knowledge of the Law is so ancient that not even Shri Krishna was the great Teacher who first propounded it. It must be remembered that Karma-Yoga has been our sacred heritage from times immemorial when we Indians were seated on the high pedestal of wealth and lore. Karma-Yoga or to put it in another way, the law of duty, is the combination of all that is best in spiritual science, in actual action and in an unselfish meditative life. Compliance with this universal law leads to the realisation of the most cherished ideas of man. Such was the doctrine taught by our forefathers, who never intended that the goal of life should be meditation alone. No one can expect Providence to protect

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one who sits with folded arms and throws his burden on others. God does not help the indolent. You must be doing all that you can to lift yourself up, and then only may you rely on the Almighty to help you. You should not, however, presume

that you have to toil that you yourself might reap the fruit of your labour. That cannot always be the case. Let us then try our utmost and leave the generations to come to enjoy that fruit. Remember, it is not you who had planted the mango-trees the fruit whereof you have tasted. Let the advantage now go to our children and their descendants. It is only given to us to toil and work. And so, there ought to be no relaxation in our efforts, lest we incur the curse of those that come after us. Action alone must be our guiding principle, action disinterested and well thought out. It does not matter who the Sovereign is. It is enough if we have full liberty to elevate ourselves in the best possible manner. This is called immutable Dharma, and Karma-Yoga is nothing but the method which leads to the attainment of Dharma or material and spiritual glory. God has declared His will. HE has willed that self can be exalted only through its own efforts. Everything lies in your hands. Karma-Yoga does not look upon this world as nothing; it requires only that your motives should be untainted by selfish interest and passion. This is the true view of practical Vedānta, the key to which is apt to be lost in sophistry. (Poona Sarvajanic Sabha Quarterly).

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# SOME INFORMATION RE: GĪTĀ- RAHASYA

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the Vedas, he discovered 'the Ancient Home of the Aryas'. Although the Gītā-Rahasya was the last book to be published in point of time, yet, greater importance must be attached to that book than to the two other books, if one bears in mind the history of the writing of those two books. These two books have come into existence only as a result of the investigations made by him into the import of the Gītā. In his introduction to 'Orion', he has made a reference to his study of the Gītā, These two books were published in due course, and they were talked of all the world over; but the Lokamanya could not get a propitious moment for starting the writing of the Gītā-Rahasya until he went to jail for the third time. The ideas regarding the



two other books were also conceived during his previous imprisonments. He could not be free from the burden of public work and get the necessary peace and leisure for writing the book until he was in jail; but, before he could actually start writing the book, he had to overcome many difficulties. It is best to describe these difficulties in his own words: "Three different orders were received at three different times regarding the book... .. After a few days, the order of leaving all my books with me was cancelled; and a new order was received, that only four books should be left with me at a time. When I complained about this to the Government of Burma, another order was received, that all the books should be left with me to enable me to write the book. At the date when I was released from jail, the number of books with me was between 350 and 400. I was given bound books (and not loose pages) for writing, after the pages in them (had been counted and numbered on either side. I was not given ink for writing but only a lead pencil and that too, ready sharpened" (Interview with Lokmanya Tilak after his release from jail, published in the Kesari of 30th June 1914).

If the readers put some pressure on their imagination, they cannot but have before their eyes a clear picture of what difficulties had to be overcome by him and what trouble he experienced while he was writing the book. Despite all this.

he got the manuscript of the book ready for printing in the winter of 1910. The fact of the rough draft of the book being ready for printing is mentioned by him in a letter written in the beginning of the year 1911; and that letter has been printed in toto in an issue of the Maratha, published in the month of March. In order that the Exposition of the Gītā made by him in the Gītā-Rahasya should be easier to follow for his readers, Lokamanya Tilak delivered four lectures during the Ganapati festival in the year 1914; after this the printing of the work was taken in hand, and the first edition of the book was published in June 1915. The subsequent history is well-known to everybody.

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## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.



In placing before the public this English translation of the GĪTĀ-RAHASYA (the Esoteric Import of the Gītā) by the late Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the object of the publishers has been to give this Exposition of the Message of the Gītā a far wider circulation than it could have in its original Marathi form. It is true that the work has been translated into some of the Indian vernaculars; but that circulation has necessarily been a limited one.

The late Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak was a spiritual and intellectual giant. He was a monumental figure in the history of India, and it is a question whether he was more a philosopher than a politician and statesman, in as much as his statesmanship and his political activities would appear to have been based on the Karma-Yoga and the principles of Ethics, which he believed to have been expounded in the Gītā. In fact, the Gītā and its teachings would seem to have been the guiding beacon of his life; and if one considers what he did for India, and compares it with what he has preached in the Gītā-Rahasya, one will come to believe that he has practised what he preached, (which few people do), and that his political activities were a concrete example of that 'universal welfare' (lokasaṃgraha), which according to him, was preached by the Gītā to be the basis of Karma-Yoga. And, one will not be far wide of the mark, if one looks upon him as a maharṣi in an age of National regeneration.

As a result of the various commentaries in ancient times on the Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā, this Divine Book has been considered by some as advocating the Path of Renunciation, whereas, others have interpreted it as advocating the Path of Devotion. Both these being paths of indifference to the world (vairagya), the effect of these commentaries has been to emasculate the devotees of the Gītā, and to fill them with an apathy towards worldly affairs, and towards a spirited and active national existence.

The Lokamanya has, however, shown in this Exposition of the Esoteric Import of the Gītā, that the true path of life

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taught by the Gītā has been pure, righteous, and moral Action in the affairs of the world (as against Renunciation, or indifference to the world), based on the Spiritual Realisation of the identity and equality of the Soul or Self (Ātman) in all created beings, and in which intense Devotion to the Almighty is the most important factor. The Author has in effect proved that the Gītā does not support any individual mode of life, such as Renunciation purely, or Action purely, or Devotion purely, but that it preaches a fusion and harmony between all the three modes of life, and declares the best mode of life to be incessant Righteous Action ("na ṛte śrāntasya sakhyāya devāḥ", i.e., "the gods do not like any, except those who labour until they are tired"), based on an Equability of Reason arising from the Spiritual Realisation of the Absolute Self, combined with an intense Devotion to the Parameśvara (Almighty).

At the 18th Session of the Mahārāṣṭra Sahitya Pariṣad (Maharashtra Literary Conference) held at Nagpur in the year 1933, I tabled a Resolution that: "This Conference is of opinion that there should be a Society for translating Marathi literature into English, in order to give international importance to the Marathi language". This Resolution was unanimously passed

by the Conference, and pursuant to that Resolution, I framed the draft of a scheme for the establishment and registration of such a literary society.

While I was busy with this project, my friend and my office client, Mr. R. B. Tilak, the surviving son of the late Lokamanya Tilak, who had seen my English translations of some Marathi poems which had been published in certain Magazines, and who also knew of the Resolution passed at the Nagpur Conference, approached me with a request that I should undertake the translation into English of the Gītā-Rahasya, which is one of the most brilliant gems of Marathi literature, and thus place before the public a concrete example of the usefulness of the Resolution adopted at my instance by the Mahārāṣṭra Sahitya Pariṣad. As the task set before me was a stupendous one, both on account of its volume and the labour involved, as also on account of the extremely difficult and involved style of the author, I was at first doubtful whether or not I should undertake the work. In

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fact, the task of getting this work translated into English had at first been attempted in the life-time of the late Lokamanya Tilak, and again after his death, by his sons, as has been mentioned by Mr. R. B. Tilak, in the Publisher's Foreword. Being inspired, however, by the "spiritual power of this

wonderful and well-known work", which saw the sale of ten thousand copies of the first Marathi edition of it "within a few months of its being published" (as stated in the Publisher's Foreword), and being further inspired by the advice of Vidulā to her son that, "muhūrtaṁ jvalitaṁ śreyo na ca dhūmayitaṁ ciraṁ" (Ma. Bhā. U. 132.15), that is, "it is better to shine like a flame for a little while, than to perpetually smoulder", I resolved that I would see this work through at any cost. In forming this resolve, I wanted to place before the Mahārāṣṭra public a concrete example of the usefulness of the Resolution. which I had tabled at the Mahārāṣṭra Sahitya Pariṣad, as also to place the real message of the Gītā according to one of the most brilliant Indian philosophers as stated in the beginning of this. Preface, before the world, which, to me, seems sadly in need of it at the present moment. Having regard to the hold which the English language has on the world, no better medium could be found for sending this message of the Gītā to every home in every corner of the world. There was a time when Indians considered it a sacrilege to put religious and philosophical lore into the hands of the unregenerate classes, and more so, into the hands of foreigners who would, of course, be far beyond the pale of these classes; but, in my humble opinion, it is the sacred duty of any one who possesses any kind of Knowledge, to place such Knowledge at the disposal of those who are inclined to purify themselves in the Flame of Knowledge; for, "asaṁskṛtās tu saṁskāryāḥ bhratṛbhīḥ pūvasaṁskṛtaiḥ", i.e., "it is the duty of those who

have been previously initiated, to initiate their brethren, who are uninitiated". And, if this Message of the Gītā, which the late Lokamanya Tilak, placed before his Maharashtrian compatriots through this book, and which his sons circulated further into India itself through the medium of its vernacular translations, goes round the world, on the River of Time, spreading the inspiration given by the original text, I shall feel that I have discharged to a certain extent my obligations to my

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mother-land, and to my mother-tongue, by advancing to a certain extent the spiritual regeneration of the world. To enable the reader to understand the method followed by me in this translation, I would like to draw his attention to the rules, printed immediately after this preface at p. xxxix, which I have attempted to follow.

As will be seen from the details about the original work which are given at p. xxviii, the whole book was written by the Author in the Mandalay jail within the period of about five months from 2nd November 1910 to 30th March 1911. So great has been my anxiety to place this wonderful interpretation of the philosophy of the Gītā before the world at large, that I have translated the whole of the book within about the same time, that is, from 20th May to 14th November 1934, by devoting every spare moment to the translation in spite of my other



work. This was, of course, the first draft of the work which I prepared; and the same has been subsequently revised, re-cast, and even re-written by me in some places, as the printing was going on.

The translation of the first six chapters (about 147 pages of the original), had been prepared by another gentleman, and the type-written copy of it was placed by the publishers in my hands; but I have not made any use of it whatsoever, as I have preferred to have a homogeneous, and consistent style and method of translation for the whole text, which would be entirely mine.

In translating, I have attempted to be as faithful to the text as possible, as I have thought that in the case of a philosophical and technical book written by a genius like the late Lokamanya, it would be extremely wrong to take any liberty whatsoever with the text. The late Lokamanya, besides being a great philosopher, and a great statesman, was also a master of the Marathi language; and even an apparently insignificant word used by him has an immense modifying or limiting value, and the omission of even a small conjunction; or the translation of an 'and' as an 'or,' would considerably injure the sense intended to be conveyed by the author. I have, therefore, not changed the text at all, but only altered the garb

or the medium of expression; for, a translation is no translation, if it is not faithful. I have not even broken up long and involved sentences; for, though a sentence may be long and involved, each portion of it has a bearing and a limiting value on the remaining portions of the sentence; and breaking up such a sentence into several small sentences, would make it lose its cumulative force, and to that extent the meaning intended to be conveyed by the author would be disabled. In following this procedure, I have satisfied myself by thinking, that if there are persons in India, who can without difficulty understand the long and involved sentences in the original Marathi text, there cannot be a dearth of intelligent persons in the world, who will be able to understand the same sentences, with their long and involved construction, in the garb of the English language and character. Some readers will possibly find the sense being continually interrupted by the Sanskrit quotations. But the rendering of those quotations has been made in such a way, that if the reader reads only the English rendering without reading the quotation, he will find that the rendering fits into the sentence and that the sense runs on without any interruption.

I had at one time thought of omitting the quotations, and giving only the English rendering, but I realized that I would thereby be destroying the characteristic feature of the style of the Author, though it would have made reading easy.

As stated above, I have made this translation both as a national duty which I owe to my mother-tongue, as also with the idea of placing the immortal Spiritual Knowledge contained in the Gītā-Rahasya within the grasp of everyone, whose Destiny inspires him to study it with attention; and, I have no doubt that every reader who goes through these pages conscientiously and sincerely, and with an unbiassed, impartial, and Truth-seeking mind will be spiritually benefited by doing so.

Before concluding this foreword, I must express my appreciation of the sincere pains taken by the Manager and the staff of the Bombay Vaibhava Press for ensuring the correct printing of the press copy, which has been considerably

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troublesome on account of the Sanskrit quotations and words, which are printed in a transliterated form; and I have even been allowed, as an exceptional case, to make corrections when the form was on the machine ready for printing. My gratitude is due to my brother Dr. V. S. Sukthankar, the Chief Editor of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute in charge of the Critical edition of the Mahābhārata, who has for some time looked into the transliterated portions and made very valuable suggestions regarding the translation. My thanks are similarly due to Professor A. B. Gajendragadkar of the

Elphinstone College, Nyāya-Ratna Dhundiraj G. Vinod M. A., and Mr. S. A. Sabnis, Solicitor, for the suggestions occasionally made by them, and the encouragement I have received from them. My thanks are lastly due to Mr. P. B. Gothaskar, retired Librarian of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, who on account of having been in touch with the publication of the Journal of that Society, was of great use to me in correcting the earlier proofs and who, in carefully revising those proofs, also drew my attention to such sundry inaccuracies, as he thought, had remained in the translation, so as to enable me to correct them, if necessary. The final proofs were corrected by me. Apart from the printer's devils which have inevitably crept in, it is necessary to mention the mistake in the heading of Chapter XII, in which the word 'Siddha-Vyavahārā' is wrong, and the correct word, as in the original, is only 'Vyavahāra.'

In concluding this Preface, I cannot but follow the injunction of the Blessed Lord that, "yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi yaj juhoṣi ... .. tat kuruṣva mad arpaṇam", (Gī. 9.27), which has also been carried out by the Author himself (see foot-note to; Author's Dedication); and I humbly dedicate this compilation to the Parameśvara in the shape of the Eternal Trinity of (i) Śrī Mahā Lakṣmī Indirā, the Goddess of Wealth, the consort of Śrī Viṣṇu, Who claimed my Devotion, and was the cause of my taking this work in hand and completing it, (ii) Śrī Mahā Kālī Pārvatī, the Goddess of Destruction, Who destroyed the Knot of Ignorance

in my heart ("ājñāna-hṛdaya-granthi" – Śiva-Gītā, 13.32), and opened my eyes to the Realities of Life, and kept my footsteps

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continually on the Path of Knowledge, and (iii) Śrī Mahā Sarasvatī Vidyā, the Goddess of Learning, Who has now claimed me for Her own, and compelled me to cast this Fruit of my Action (karmaṇy evādhikāras te mā phaleṣu kadā ca na – Gī. 2.47), in the shape of this translation, on the River of Time, which circumscribes and goes round the whole world, and Who is verily my Mother (for I am a Sārasvat by birth!).

OM-TAT-SAT.

आतां प्रार्थना ऐका कमलापति । तुझे नामी राहो माझी मती ।  
हेचि मागणे पुढता पुढती । परंज्योति व्यंकटेशा ॥

~ B. S. SUKTHANKAR.

Bombay, 12th June 1935.

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# GENERAL RULES REGARDING THE TRANSLATION.

(i) Wherever a philosophical Sanskrit word used in the Marathi text (not being a technical philosophical term which has been Anglicised), has been rendered by me into English, I have, wherever necessary, placed immediately after such rendering the actual word used by the author in the original, in italics, and within brackets; e. g., bodily (*kāyika*), Self-Realised (*ātma-jñānin*), occasional (*naimittika*), etc., This has been done to enable such of my readers as are acquainted with Sanskrit to understand what the author himself wanted to say, in case my rendering has not been correct.

(ii) If the word in the original text is a technical philosophical word, which has been Anglicised, I have used the word in Roman characters, beginning with a capital letter, e. g. Jīva, Parameśvara, Prakṛti, Paramātmā, Ātman etc.

(iii) Diacritical signs have been used in order to ensure correct pronunciation by the reader, whose attention is drawn to the tabular statement at p. xl showing what diacritical sign has been used for indicating which sound,

(iv) Technical philosophical English words are used with an initial capital letter in order to distinguish them from when

they are not so used, e. g., Real, Matter, Spirit, the Imperceptible, Knowledge, Mind, Consciousness, the Qualityless etc., unless they have been used as adjectives, or in a non-technical sense, e. g., the qualityless Brahman etc.

(v) If in the text itself, there is a Sanskrit word in brackets after another Sanskrit word, (which latter one has been rendered by me into English), the Author's word in brackets, though in Sanskrit, *has not been put into italics*, in order to distinguish the case from where I have put such words in italic characters, in brackets, after the rendering, as mentioned in (i) above.

(vi) If the Sanskrit word in the original has been retained in the translated text, its rendering in English is placed after it in brackets; e. g., the *kārya* (product), *karma* (Action) et. This has been done only where the retention has been necessary on account of the context.

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(vii) I have not added anything of my own in the translated text except as follows:- In almost all places where the Author has given a Sanskrit quotation, he has immediately after- wards translated this quotation or given a summary of it in Marathi; and this, of course, has been translated into English. In some places, however, the Author has not translated a Sanskrit quotation into Marathi; and in these cases, I myself have translated it into English, for the convenience of the reader not

acquainted with Sanskrit; but, wherever this has been done, I have added the word " ~Translator." after the translation. Any inaccuracies in such translations, would, of course, be mine. Where, however, such a quotation has been from the Gītā itself, I have rendered into English, the translation of that quotation, as made by the Author himself, in his translation of the stanzas of the Gītā (See Vol. II of this work).

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# ISO 15919 SCHEME OF TRANSLITERATION OF SANSKRIT

अ – – a	आ – – ā	इ – – i	
उ – – u	ऊ – – ū	ऋ – – ṛ	ए – – e
ऐ – – ai	ओ – – o	औ – – au	
क – – k	ख – – kh	ग – – g	घ – – gh
ङ – – ṅ	च – – c	छ – – ch	ज – – j
झ – – jh	ञ – – ñ	ट – – ṭ	ठ – – ṭh
ड – – ḍ	ढ – – ḍh	ण – – ṇ	त – – t
थ – – th	द – – d	ध – – dh	न – – n
प – – p	फ – – ph	ब – – b	भ – – bh
म – – m	य – – y	र – – r	ल – – l
व – – v	श – – ś	ष – – ṣ	स – – s
ह – – h	क्ष – – kṣ	ज्ञ – – jñ	
ं (anusvara) ... ṁ	: (visarga) ... ḥ	ऽ (avagraha) ... '	

# PICTORIAL MAP OF PHILOSOPHICAL SCHOOLS

EXPLANATION OF THE PICTORIAL MAP OF THE PROMINENT  
SCHOOLS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY MENTIONED IN THE GĪTĀ-  
RAHASYA.

Shown on the wrapper and opp. page 18.



The river is the River of Time, on the banks which are the various Ages through which India has passed, namely, (1) the

Vedic Age, (2) the Age of the Gita, (3) the Age of Buddha, (4) the Age of Shri Shankaracharya, (5) the Age Dnaneshvara, Tukarama and others being the Age of Devotion, (6) the Age of Shri Samarth Ramadasa, showing the revival of Action, and (7) the deputation of Indian Leaders at the gates of the Houses of Parliament and (8) Mahatma Gandhi, in the Present Age.

Nos. 1, 2, 6, 7 and 8 are the Ages of Action, or of Karma-Yoga starting with the Vedic Karma age, and ending with the present days, and forming a big L, which means the Lucky Ages, whereas Nos. 3, 4 and 5 are the Ages of Renunciation, which are only a small passing cloud on the Karma-Yoga tradition of India.

The narrow bed of the river in the Ages of Renunciation, spreads out as it flows down along the plains of the Ages of Action, suggesting the widening out of the view-point of Philosophy from the narrow Pass of Renunciation to the broad Fields of Action.

The two inset pictures in the form of the 'Svastika' show the five Pāṇḍavas on the Kuru field, and the five Indian leaders near the Houses of Parliament, in each case, on the Field of Action. The last picture is of Mahatma Gandhi, the latest Karma-Yogin of India.

~ R. B. TILAK.

# AUTHORS DEDICATION.

## ॥अथ समर्पणम्॥

श्रीगीतार्थः क्व गंभीरः व्याख्यातः कविभिः पुरा ।  
आचार्यैर्यश्च बहुधा क्व मेऽल्पविषया मतिः ॥  
तथापि चापलादस्मि वक्तुं तं पुनरुद्यतः ।  
शास्त्रार्थान् संमुखीकृत्य प्रत्नान् नव्यैः सहोचितैः ।  
तमार्याः श्रोतुमर्हन्ति कार्याकार्य-दिदृक्षमः ॥  
एवं विज्ञाप्य सुजनाम् कालिदासाक्षरैः प्रियैः ॥  
बालो गंगाधरिश्चाऽहं तिलकान्वयजो द्विजः ।  
महाराष्ट्रो पुण्यपुरे वसन् शांडिल्यगौत्रभृत् ॥  
शाके मुन्यग्निवसुभू-संमिते शालिवाहने ।  
अनुसृत्य सतां मार्गे स्मरंश्चापि वचो [1] हरेः ॥  
समर्पये ग्रन्थमिमं श्रीशाय जनतात्मने ।  
अनेन प्रीयतां देवो भगवान् पुरुषः परः ॥

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[1] यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।

How very profound is the importance of the Gītā, which was expounded in ancient times by wise men, and which was further explained in various ways by Ācāryas, and how limited is the scope of my intelligence? Still, I am impelled by my rashness to explain the same once more, keeping before my eyes the old Śāstras as well as notable modern ideas; and honourable people desiring to understand what is doable and what not-doable, deserve to hear this (new) explanation. Having made this request to revered persons in the sweet words of Kālidāsa, I, a Brahmin, (by name) Bāla, the son of Gaṅgādhara, born in the family of Tilaka, belonging to the clan (gotra) of the Ṛṣi Śāṇḍilya, and a resident of the town of Poona, situate in the Mahārāṣṭra, following the path of the Good, and with the words of Hari [1] in my mind, do dedicate this work to the Lord of Lakṣmī, the Soul of the World, in the Śalivāhana Śaka 1837. May the Blessed Lord, the Highest Puruṣa, be pleased by this dedication.

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[1] "Whatever you do, or eat, or offer by way of sacrifice, or give, or perform by way of austerity, dedicate all that to Me, O, son of Kunti ". (Gītā 9.27).

# AUTHORS PREFACE.

I am only repeating the stale words uttered by Saints.  
How can an insignificant man like me know this?

~ Tukārāma.

Although in the beginning of this book, I have explained my reasons for publishing it, in spite of the fact that there are in existence many Sanskrit commentaries, or criticisms, or Prakrit translations, or exhaustive and universally accepted expositions of the Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā, yet, there is no better place than an Introduction for explaining all such things as cannot be included in the discussion of the subject-matter of the book itself. The first of these things is about the author himself. It is now nearly forty-three years since I made my first acquaintance with the Bhagavadgītā. In the year 1872, during the last illness of my father, the task of reading out to him a Prakrit commentary on the Bhagavadgītā called Bhāṣā-vivṛtti fell to my lot. At that date, that is, when I was only 16 years old, it was not possible for me to fully understand the import of the Gītā. Still, as the impressions made on the mind in young age are lasting, the liking for the Bhagavadgītā which then came into existence did not die out; and when I had later on made further studies in Sanskrit and English, I had occasion to read from time to time the Sanskrit commentaries and

other criticisms, as also the expositions by many learned scholars in English and in Marathi on the Gītā. I was then faced by the doubt as to why the Gītā, which was expounded in order to induce to fight that Arjuna, who was dejected by the idea that it was a sin to war with one's own relatives, should contain an Exposition of the manner in which Release could be obtained by Knowledge (Jñāna) or by Devotion (Bhakti), that is to say, only of the 'mokṣa-mārga'; and that doubt gradually gained ground, because, I could not find a satisfactory answer to that question in any commentary on the Gītā. It is quite possible that others too might have felt the same doubt. One cannot say no to that. When a person is engulfed in commentaries, he cannot find a different solution, though he may feel that the solution given in the commentary is not satisfactory. I,

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therefore, put aside all criticisms and commentaries, and independently and thoughtfully read the Gītā over several times. I then got out of the clutches of the commentators, and was convinced that the original Gītā did not preach the Philosophy of Renunciation (nivṛtti), but of Energism (Karma-Yoga); and that possibly, the single word 'yoga' used in the Gītā had been used to mean Karma-Yoga. That conviction was strengthened by the study of the Mahābhārata, the Vedānta-Sūtras, the Upaniṣads and other Sanskrit and English treatises

on Vedānta; and believing that by publishing that opinion, there would be a fuller discussion on the subject, and that it would be easier to arrive at the truth, I delivered public lectures on the subject on four or five occasions at different times. One of these was delivered at Nagpur in January 1902, and the other one at the Śaṅkeśvara Maṭha in August 1904, in the presence of Jagadguru Śrī Śaṅkarācārya of the Karavīra and Śaṅkeśvara Maṭha, and at his request. The summary of the lecture delivered at Nagpur was published in the newspapers at the time. With the same object, I also discussed the matter from time to time privately, whenever I had leisure, with some of my learned friends. One of these was the late Mr. Shripati Buva Bhingarkar. In his company, I had occasion to see some Prakrit treatises pertaining to the Bhāgavata cult, and some of the ideas explained in the Gītā- Rahasya were first fixed in the discussions between myself and the Buva. It is a matter of deep regret that he is not alive to see this work. Though my opinion that the creed preached in the Gītā was one of Action, had, in this way, become quite definite, and though I had decided to reduce it to writing, many years went by. But I thought that a considerable amount of misunderstanding would arise if I merely published in a book form, this moral of the Gītā. which had not been accepted in the commentaries, criticisms, or translations now commonly available, without assigning any reasons as to why I was unable to accept the conclusions arrived at by the former commentators. At the same time, as the work of dealing with the opinions of all the



commentators, and exposing their incompleteness with reasons, and of comparing the religion expounded in the Gītā with other

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religions or philosophies was one entailing great labour, it was not possible for me to satisfactorily complete it, within a short period of time. Therefore, although my friends Daji Saheb Kharay and Dada Saheb Khaparday had, in anticipation and somewhat hastily, announced that I was shortly going to publish a treatise on the Gītā, yet, seeing that the material in hand was not sufficient, I went on putting off the work of writing the book. And later on, when in the year 1908, I was convicted and sent to Mandalay, in Burma, the chance of this book being written came practically to an end. But, when after sometime, Government was pleased to grant permission to take the books and other things essential for writing this book from Poona to Mandalay, the draft of this book was first made in the Mandalay Jail in the Winter of 1910 – 1911 (between Kartik Shuddha 1st and Falgun Vadya 30th of the Saka Year 1832); and thereafter, the draft was improved upon from time to time, as things suggested themselves to me; and those portions which had remained incomplete as the necessary books had not been available, were completed after my release from jail. Nevertheless, I cannot even now say that this work is complete in every respect; because, the elementary

principles of Release (mokṣa) and Moral Philosophy are very recondite, and they have been so exhaustively expounded by ancient and- modern scholars, that it is very often difficult to correctly decide which portion of such expositions ought to be incorporated in this small book, without including too much. But, my physical condition is now becoming weak, as described by the great Mahārāṣṭra poet Moropanta in the following āryā stanza:—

Old age, which is the spotless white banner carried by the army of attendants of Death, is already in sight I

And my body is exhausted in the struggle with diseases, which are the advance-guard of that army II ;

and my contemporaries in life have passed on. So, having come to the conclusion that I should place before the public the information which I have gathered, and the ideas which have occurred to me, and that someone else possessed by the same

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inspiration (samānadharmā), will come to birth in the immediate or distant future, and develop and work them out, I have published this book.

Though I am not prepared to accept the opinion that the Gītā gives only an exposition of the paths of Release based on Renunciation, such as, 'the Knowledge of the Brahman' or 'Devotion', after proving worldly Action to be inferior and negligible, I must, at the outset, make it dear that I do not also say that there is no exposition at all in the Bhagavadgītā of the paths of obtaining Release. Nay; I too have shown in this book, that according to the philosophy of the Gītā, it is the primary duty of every human being in this world, to acquire the Knowledge of the pure form of the Parameśvara, and thereby to cleanse out and purify his own Reason as far as possible. But, that is not the principal subject-matter of the Gītā. At the commencement of the war, Arjuna was engulfed in a perplexity about what his duty was, namely, whether he should or should not take part in a war, which would ruin the welfare of his Ātman, in the shape of Release, as a result of his committing heinous sins like the destruction of his own clan, etc., though it was the duty of every Kṣatriya to fight. And I am of opinion that in order to clear this doubt, the Gītā has propounded the device of performing Action in such a way that one ultimately attains Release without committing sin, namely, the Karma-Yoga founded on Knowledge, in which Devotion is the principal factor, after it had fully expounded the Philosophy of Action and Non-Action, and also the various paths of attaining Release according to pure Vedānta Philosophy, and had established that no man is free from Action, and that Action should never be given up. This

exposition of Action and Non-Action, or of Morality and Immorality is called ' Ethics ' by modern purely Materialistic philosophers. It is not that I could not have made this exposition by following the usual procedure, and explained how this principle has been established by the Gītā, by commenting on the Gītā stanza by stanza. But, unless one is thoroughly conversant with the various philosophical doctrines, arguments and deductions pertaining to Vedānta, vyavasāyātmikā, Sāṃkhya, the Doctrine of Causality (karma-vipāka) and

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Devotion, on the authority of which the doctrine of Karma-Yoga has been established in the Gītā, and the reference to which is sometimes very succinct, the full purport of the exposition made in the Gītā is not easily understood. I have, therefore, scientifically divided all the various subjects or doctrines, which one comes across in the Gītā, into chapters, and briefly expounded them, together with the most important logical arguments relating to them; and I have, at the same time, consistently with the critical methods of the present day, compared in brief and as occasion arose, the most important doctrines propounded in the Gītā, with the doctrines propounded in other religions and philosophies. It may thus be said that the essay 'Gītā-Rahasya' (the Esoteric Import of the Gītā), which is published in the beginning of this

book, is by itself an independent, though a small, book on the doctrine of Proper Action (Karma-Yoga). But, in any case, it was not possible to consider fully each individual stanza of the Gītā in a general exposition of this kind. I have, therefore, at the end of the book, translated the Gītā, stanza by stanza, and added exhaustive commentaries to the translations in different places, in order to explain the anterior and posterior context; or, in order to show how former commentators have stretched the meaning of some of the stanzas of the Gītā in order to support their own doctrines (See Gītā 3.17 – 19; 6.3; and 18.2); or, in order to show which of the various doctrines enunciated in the Gītā-Rahasya appear how and where in the Gītā, according to the catechismal method of the Gītā, It is true that by following this method, some subject-matter has been repeated; but, as I felt convinced that I could not in any other way fully dissipate the misunderstanding, which now exists in the mind of the common reader as regards the import of the Gītā, I have separated the exposition of the Gītā-Rahasya (Esoteric Import of the Gītā) from the translation itself; and thereby, it has become easy for me (i) to show with authorities and with former history, where and in what manner, the , doctrines of the Gītā with reference to Vedānta, Mīmāṃsā, Devotion etc., have appeared in the Bhārata, the Sāṃkhya system, the Vedānta-Sūtras, the Upaniṣads, the Mīmāṃsā. and other original texts, (ii) to

explain in a lucid way the difference between Renunciation. (Samnyāsa) and Action (Karma-Yoga), as also (iii) to expound, in a proper way the importance of the Gītā, from the point of view of practical Action, by comparing the Gītā with other religious opinions or philosophies. If there had not been all sorts of commentaries on the Gītā, and if various persons had not interpreted the import of the Gītā, each in a different way, it would have been totally unnecessary for me to quote the original Sanskrit authorities which go to support the propositions laid down by me in my book. But such a thing, cannot be done in the present times; and it is likely that many may doubt the correctness of the import of the Gītā or of the propositions, laid down by me. I have, therefore, everywhere pointed out the authorities which support what I say, and in important places, I have given the original Sanskrit text of the authorities with translations. As many of these dicta are usually accepted as proved truths in books on Vedānta, my secondary object in quoting them has been, that my readers should get acquainted with them in the course of reading, and find it easier on that account to remember the doctrines embodied in those statements. But, as it is not likely that all readers will be knowing Sanskrit, I have arranged my book on the whole in such a way that, if any reader who does not understand Sanskrit, reads the book, omitting the Sanskrit stanzas, there will not be any interruption anywhere in the sense; on this account, it has become necessary in many

places, to remain satisfied with giving a mere summary of the Sanskrit stanza, instead of giving a literal translation of it. But as the original stanza is given in each case, there is no risk of any misunderstanding arising as a result of this procedure having been followed.

There is a story told about the Kohinoor diamond that after it had been taken from India to England, it was again cut there, and on that account, it began to look more brilliant. This law, which is true in the case of a diamond, also applies to a jewel in the shape of truth. It is true that the religion propounded by the Gītā is true and unshakeable. But, as the time at which and the form in which it was propounded and the other attendant circumstances have considerably changed,

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it does not strike may as brilliant as before. As the Gītā was propounded at a time, when 'whether to act or renounce' was considered a question of great importance, to be determined before arriving at a decision as to which act was good and which bad, many people look upon a considerable portion of it as now unnecessary; and, as that position has been further made worse by commentaries supporting the Path of Renunciation, the exposition of Karma-Yoga contained in the Gītā has become very difficult to understand for many in the

present age. Besides, some of our new scholars are of opinion that as a result of the present growth of the Material sciences in the West, the deductions laid down in ancient times with reference to the Karma-Yoga, on the basis of the Philosophy of the Absolute Self, cannot possibly be fully applicable to modern conditions. In order to prove that this idea is wrong. I have briefly mentioned in various places in my exposition of the Gītā -Rahasya (Esoteric Import of the Gītā) the doctrines of Western philosophers, which are similar to those in the Gītā. Really speaking, the exposition of Ethics in the Gītā is in no way fortified by such a comparison. Yet, those people whose eyes are dazzled by the present unheard of growth of the Material sciences, or who have learnt to consider the Science of Ethics, only externally, that is to say, only in its Material aspect, as a result of the present one-sided methods of education will be made to see clearly by means of this comparison that not only has human knowledge not yet gone beyond the doctrines laid down on this subject by our philosophers, for the simple reason that Ethics and the science of Release are both beyond Material Knowledge, but, deliberations are still going on these questions in the West, from the Metaphysical point of view, and the opinions of these Metaphysicians are not materially different from the doctrines laid down in the Gītā. This fact will be clearly borne out by the comparative exposition appearing in the different chapters of the Gītā-Rahasya. But, as this subject is very extensive, I must explain here, with reference to the summaries of the opinions of Western philosophers which



1 have given in various places, that, as my principal object has been only to expound the import of the Gītā, I have accepted as authoritative the

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doctrines laid down in the Gītā, and have mentioned the Western opinions only so far as was necessary in order to show to what extent the doctrines of Western moral philosophers or scholars tally with the doctrines in the Gītā; and this too has been done by me only to such an extent that the ordinary Marathi reader should experience no difficulty in grasping their import. It cannot, therefore, be disputed that those who wish to ascertain the minute differences between the two— and these differences are many – or to see the full argumentative exposition or developing out of these theorems, must examine the original Western books themselves. Western scholars say that the first systematic treatise on the discrimination between Right and Wrong Action or on Morality was written by the Greek philosopher Aristotle. But in my opinion, these questions had been examined long before Aristotle in a more exhaustive and scientific manner in the Mahābhārata and in the Gītā; and no moral doctrine has yet been evolved, which is different from the doctrines metaphysically expounded in the Gītā. The solution given by Aristotle of the question whether it is better to spend one's life peacefully, in philosophical meditation, and

living like a hermit, or to spend it in all sorts of political activities, is to be found in the Gītā; and the opinion of Socrates that whatever sin is committed by man, is committed by him only as a result of ignorance, is also to be found to a certain extent in the Gītā, because it is a doctrine of the Gītā that it is not possible for a man to commit any sin, after his Reason has become equable as a result of the Knowledge of the Brahman. The doctrine of the Epicureans and the Stoics that the conduct of the perfect Jñānin is a standard for everybody, from the moral point of view, is to be found in the Gītā; and the description of the perfect Jñānin, given by the philosophers belonging to these sects, tallies with the description of the Sthitaprajña (Steady- in-Mind) given in the Gītā. Similarly, the dictum of Mill, Spencer, Kant, and other Materialistic philosophers, that the highest peak or test of Morality consists in everybody acting so as to promote the welfare of the whole of mankind, is included in the external characteristic of a Sthitaprajña described in the Gītā in the words "sarvabhūtahite-rataḥ" (i.e.,

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"one busy promoting the welfare of all created beings" ~Translator.); and the arguments relating to Ethics, and the doctrines regarding Freedom of Will, enunciated by Kant and Green, are to be found mentioned in the Gītā, on the authority of the Knowledge contained in the Upaniṣads. If the Gītā had

not contained anything more than this, it would still have commanded universal respect. But the Gītā does not stop there. After showing that the conflict between Release (mokṣa), Devotion (bhakti), and Ethics (nīti-dharma) imagined by Materialistic philosophers, as also the conflict between Knowledge (jñāna) and Right Action (karma) imagined by the followers of the School of Renunciation (saṁnyāsa) were groundless, and also showing that the fundamental element in the brahma-vidyā (science of the Brahman), and in bhakti (the Path of Devotion) is the foundation of Ethics and good behaviour, the Gītā has shown what path of life should be adopted by a man by properly harmonising Knowledge (jñāna), Renunciation (saṁnyāsa), Right Action (karma) and Devotion (bhakti). The Gītā is thus essentially a treatise on Right or Proper Action (Karma- Yoga); and that is why it has been given a position of supreme importance in all Vedic treatises, which refer to it as 'brahmavidyāntargata (karma-) yoga-śāstra' (i.e., "the Science of Right Action included in the Science of the Brahman" ~Translator.) The saying "gītā sugītā kartavyā kim anyaiḥ śāstra vistaraiḥ", i.e., "it is quite enough if one thoroughly studies the Gītā; what is the use of dabbling in the other Śāstras?" is indeed correct; and, therefore, it is my earnest and respectful request to everyone, who wishes to become acquainted with the basic principles of the Hindu Religion and Morality, that he should first study this wonderful and unprecedented book; because, as the Gītā expounds the root principles of the present Vedic Religion, as also its final

aspect, based on Knowledge and giving primary importance to Devotion, and preaching the Karma-Yoga (Right Action), which (aspect) it had assumed after Sāṃkhya, Nyāya, Mīmāṃsā, Upaniṣads, Vedānta and other ancient Śāstras, which dealt with the Perishable and the Imperishable (kṣarākṣara) and the Body and the Ātman (kṣetra-kṣetrajña) had come to as perfect a state as possible, it may well be said that there is no other work in the whole of Sanskrit

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literature, which explains the principles of the present Hindu Religion in as succinct and yet as clear and unambiguous a manner as the Gītā.

From what has been stated above, my readers will get an idea as to the general trend of the exposition contained in the Gītā-Rahasya. From the reference to the opinions of the earlier commentators on the Gītā, made in the beginning of the third chapter of the Śāṃkarabhāṣya on the Gītā, it would appear that these commentaries were in favour of Karma-Yoga (Right Action). These commentaries are not now available; therefore, there is no reason why this book of mine should not be called the first comparative exposition of the Gītā, in support of Right Action. The meanings of some stanzas given in this book are different from those given in the present commentaries, and I have also had to deal with many other subjects, which have

nowhere been fully explained in the Marathi language. I have attempted to explain these subjects and the arguments in support of such explanation succinctly, but in as clear and easily intelligible a manner as possible; and notwithstanding repetition, I have purposely given, in many places, synonyms for various words, of which the meanings have not yet become current or commonly known in the Marathi language, side by side with those words; and I have also clearly shown in different places the most salient theorems in these subjects, by separating them from the exposition itself. Yet, it is always difficult to discuss scientific and difficult subjects in a few words; and the Marathi terminology of these subjects is also not yet definite. I am, therefore, alive to the fact that in this my new way of exposition, there may possibly creep in difficulty, unintelligibleness, or incompleteness, as a result of mental confusion, inadvertence, or for some other reasons. But the Bhagavadgītā is not something unknown to my readers. The Gītā is a book which is daily recited by many, and there are also many who have studied, or who are studying it scientifically. I have, therefore, to request such authoritative persons, that if this book comes to their hands, and they come across any flaws in it of the nature mentioned above, they will please draw my attention to them, so that I will consider the suggestions, and.

will also make the necessary corrections, if there is any occasion to bring out a second edition of this book. Some persons are likely to gather the impression that I have a particular system (saṁpradāya) of mine own, and that I have explained the Gītā in a special way, in support of that system. I must, therefore, make it clear here that the Gītā-Rahasya has not been written with reference to any particular person, or any particular system. I have put forward the clear meaning of the Sanskrit stanzas in the Gītā, according to my understanding. If, as a result of this straight-forward translation – and as Sanskrit is now widely understood, may people will easily see whether or not my translation is straight-forward – my exposition assumes a doctrine-supporting character, then such character is of the Gītā and not mine. As the clear request of Arjuna to the Blessed Lord was: "Do not confuse me by placing before me several courses of conduct, but point out to me definitely only one course, which is the proper course" (Gī. 3.2; 5.17), it is clear that the Gītā must be in support of one particular opinion (Gī. 3.31); and I have set out to explain what that opinion is, by impartially interpreting the original Gītā. I have not preconceived a doctrine first, and then attempted to stretch the meaning of the Gītā, because the Gītā will not fit in with that doctrine. In short, my attempt is to popularise the true inner import of the Gītā with the devotees of the Gītā – to whatever doctrine such import may pertain – and I have come forward to make, so to say, such a Sacrifice of Knowledge (jñāna-Yajña) as is referred to by the

Blessed Lord at the end of the Gītā; and I am sanguine that my countrymen, and co-religionists, will willingly give me this charitable offering of information in order to make my attempt flawless.

I have explained at length in the Gītā-Rahasya the reasons for the difference between the Esoteric Import of the Gītā according to me, and that propounded by ancient commentators. But, though there may be such a difference of opinion as to the teaching of the Gītā, yet, as I have always made use more or less, of the various commentaries or criticisms on the Gītā, as also of the former or modern Prakrit translations of the Gītā, as occasion arose in writing the present book, I must here say that

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I am deeply indebted to them. I must likewise express my gratitude towards those Western philosophers, to the theorems mentioned in whose works I have now and then referred. As it is doubtful whether it would have been possible for me to write this book without the help of all those works, I have quoted in the beginning of this introduction the following words of Tukārāma: " I am only repeating the stale words uttered by saints". That a work like the Gītā, which propounds Knowledge, untouched by Time, that is, equally true at all

times, should, according to changing times, give fresh inspiration to human beings, is not a matter of surprise; because, that is the characteristic feature of such universal works. But, the labour spent on such works by ancient scholars is not, on that account, wasted. This same argument applies to the translations of the Gītā into English, German, and other languages- made by Western scholars. Though these translations are based primarily on the ancient commentaries on the Gītā, some Western scholars have also started interpreting the Gītā independently. But, these expositions of the Western scholars are to a certain extent incomplete, and in some places undoubtedly misleading and wrong, whether because, they have not properly understood the principle of the true (Karma-) Yoga or the history of the Vedic religious systems, or because, they have principally inclined towards the external examination of the matter only, or, for some other similar reason. There is no occasion to consider or examine here in detail those works of Western scholars on the Gītā. In the Appendices to this book, I have stated what I have to say regarding the important questions raised by them. Nevertheless, I must in this Preface refer to some writings in English on the Gītā, which I have recently come across. One such writing is that of Mr. Brooks. Mr. Brooks is a Theosophist and he has maintained in his book on the Gītā, that the Bhagavadgītā is in favour of Action (Karma-Yoga); and he has expressed the same opinion in his lectures. The second thesis is by Mr. S. Radhakrishnan of Madras, which has appeared in



the form of a small essay in the International Ethical Quarterly (July 1911) published in America. In this work, the similarity between the Gītā and Kant on questions of Ethics and

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Freedom of Will has been shown. In my opinion, this similarity is even more comprehensive than has been shown in this essay; and the arguments of Green on the question of Ethics are even more consistent with the Gītā than those of Kant. But as both these questions have been dealt with by me in this book, I shall not repeat the same matter here. Pandit Sitanath Tatvabhushana has also recently published a book in English called Kṛṣṇa and the Gītā, which contains the twelve lectures delivered by that scholar on the Gītā. But, anyone who reads those books will be sure to notice, that there is a great deal of difference between the arguments contained in these books or in the book of Brooks and those advanced in mine. But, these writings show that my ideas about the Gītā are not new-fangled; and, as these works are a propitious sign that people are paying more and more attention to the doctrine of Right Action (karma-yoga) in the Gītā, I am taking this opportunity of congratulating these modern writers.

It is true that this work was completed in the Mandalay Jail; but it had been written with a lead pencil, and it contained

corrections and deletions in many places; so, when it had been returned to me after inspection by Government, it was necessary to make a fair copy of it for printing; and if I myself had to do that work, who knows how many months more would have passed before the work was published! But Messrs. Waman Gopal Joshi, Narayan Krishna Gogte, Ramkrishna Dattatraya Paradkar, Ramkrishna Sadashiva Pimputkar, Appaji Vishnu Kulkarni and other gentlemen, have willingly rendered assistance in this matter and quickly finished the work, for which I am grateful to them. Similarly Mr. Krishnaji Prabhakar Khadilkar, and especially Vedaśāstra-saṁpanna Dīkṣit Kāśīnāth Śāstri Lele, specially came here from Bombay, and took the trouble of reading the manuscript, and made many useful and critical suggestions, for which I am grateful to them. The reader, however, must not forget that the responsibility of the opinions expressed in this book is mine. In this way, the book was got ready for printing, but there was the risk of shortage of paper on account of the War. This difficulty was overcome by the timely supply

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of paper, which was good in my opinion, by Messrs. D. Padamji & Son, proprietors of the Swadeshi Paper Mills in Bombay; and it became possible to publish a book on the Gītā on good Indian paper. Yet, as the book was found to be larger than estimated, while the printing was in progress, there was again

shortage of paper; and, if that deficit had not been met by the proprietor of the Reay Paper Mills, Poona, my readers would have had to wait for a few months more for the publication of the book. Therefore, not only I, but also my readers, must feel grateful to the proprietors of these two mills. The task of correcting proofs still remained. This was undertaken by Messrs. Ramkrishna Dattatraya Paradkar, Ramkrishna Sadashiva Pimputkar and Hari Raghunath Bhagvat. But of these, Mr. Hari Raghunath Bhagvat was alone attending to the work of verifying the references to other books made in different places, and of pointing out to me such defects as had remained. Needless to say, without the assistance of all these people, it would have been impossible for me to publish this book so soon. I, therefore, take this opportunity of sincerely thanking all these people. Finally, I must express my thanks to the owner of the Chitra-Shala Press, who undertook to publish this book carefully and as early as possible, and who has carried out his undertaking. Just as the assistance of many persons is necessary before the grain is turned into food for the eater, though there may be a harvest in the field, so also I may safely say, is the case with writers— at any rate, that was the case with me. And therefore, I once more sincerely thank all those persons who have helped me— whether or not I have specifically mentioned their names in the above list – and I end this preface.

The preface is over. Now, though I feel unhappy at the idea that that subject, in thinking on which I have spent many years, and the constant company of and meditation over which has brought so much satisfaction to my mind, and happiness into my heart, is now going to leave my hands in the shape of a book, yet, as these thoughts have come into my mind for the sole purpose of being handed down to coming generations – with interest, or at any rate, just as

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they are— I am placing this philosopher's stone, in the shape of a rāja-guhya (the king of mysticisms) of the Vedic religion into the hands of my promising readers, uttering the canon (mantra): "uttiṣṭhata! jāgrata! prāpyavarānnibodhata!", that is, "Arise, awake, and understand these blessings (conferred by the Blessed Lord)", and with feelings of affection. In this (mysticism) lies the entire essence of Right and Wrong Action, and the Blessed Lord Himself has confidently given us the assurance, that the observance of this Religion, even to a small extent, delivers a person from great difficulties. What more can anybody want? Keep in mind the universal rule that. "Nothing happens, unless something is done", and devote yourselves to Desireless Action; that is all. The Gītā. was not preached either as a pastime for persons tired out after living a worldly life in the pursuit of selfish motives, nor as a preparatory lesson for living such worldly life, but in order to

give philosophical advice as to how one should live his worldly life with an eye to Release (mokṣa), and as to the true duty of human beings in worldly life. My last prayer to everyone, therefore, is, that one should not fail to thoroughly understand this ancient science of the life of a householder, or of worldly life, as early as possible in one's life.

~ BAL GANGADHAR TILAK

Poona, Adhika Vaisakha, Saka Year, 1837

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Its being suffered ("prārabdha karmāṇām bhogād eva kṣayaḥ") – "the Doctrine of 'Naiṣkarmyasiddhi' (Release by refraining from Action) of the Mīmāṃsā School, is not acceptable to the Vedāntists – there is no escape from the Bond of Karma, except by Jñāna (Knowledge) – the meaning of the word 'Jñāna' – the Embodied Ātman is free to acquire Knowledge (p. 389), but as it does not possess implements for doing so, it is to that extent dependent – even the most trifling Action, performed for obtaining Release is not wasted – therefore, success will be obtained sometime or other by hard work – the nature of the Destruction of Karma – one cannot escape Karma, but should give up the Hope of Fruit – the bond of Karma is in the Mind, not in the Karma – therefore, whenever Jñāna is acquired, Release is the only possible result – the importance, nevertheless, of the hour of close of life (p. 400)

the Karma-kāṇḍa and the Jñāna-kāṇḍa – the Yajña prescribed by the Śrutis, and that prescribed by the Smṛtis – the state of a householder involving the performance of Action – its two divisions into Knowledge-full and Knowledge-less Action – different ultimate states accordingly – the Devayāna and the Pitṛyāna paths – whether these words indicate the time of death, or deities – the third path namely, the path to hell – a description of the condition of one who is Free from Re-birth (jīvanmukta) ... .. [p. 359 - 415.](#)

## **CHAPTER XI. SĀMNYĀSA and KARMA-YOGA.**

(Renunciation and Karma-Yoga.)

The question of Arjuna as to whether Sāṁnyāsa or Karma-Yoga was the better course – similar paths of life according to Western philosophy – synonyms of the words 'Sāṁnyāsa' and 'Karma-Yoga' – meaning of the word 'Sāṁnyāsa' – Karma-Yoga is not a part of Sāṁnyāsa, but both are independent of each other – the confusion created in this matter by commentators – the clear doctrine of the Gītā that the path of Karma- Yoga is the better of the two – the perversions made by the commentators belonging to the School of Renunciation – the reply to the same – Arjuna cannot be looked upon as Ignorant (ajñāni), (p. 432) – the reason given in the Gītā why Karma-Yoga is superior – from times immemorial, the course of conduct

(ācāra) has been two-fold, and therefore, useless for determining which is better – the three Niṣṭhās according to Janaka and the two Niṣṭhās according to the Gītā – it does not follow that Karma should be renounced, because it creates a bond; it is enough if one renounces the Hope for Fruit of Action – it is impossible to renounce Karma – if one renounces Karma, one will not get even food to eat – even if as a result of Knowledge, there is no duty of one's own to perform, and one's desires are extinguished, one cannot escape Karma – it is, therefore, essential to continue Karma desirelessly, even after the Acquisition of Knowledge – the illustrations of the Blessed Lord and of Janaka – the giving up of the Hope of Fruit of Action – indifference towards the world (vairāgya) and enthusiasm for Action (p. 455) – Universal Welfare (lokasaṁgraha) and the nature of it – this is the true resolution of the Realisation of the Brahman (brahmajñāna) – still, this universal welfare must be obtained according to the arrangement of the four castes and desirelessly (p. 467) – the path of leading one's life in four stages, which is described in the Smṛti texts – the importance of the state of a householder (gṛhasthāśrama) – the Bhāgavata doctrine – the original meanings of the word 'Bhāgavata' and 'Smārta' – the Gītā supports the Karma-Yoga, that is to say, the Bhāgavata doctrine – the difference between the Karma-Yoga of the Gītā and the Karma-Yoga of the Mīmāṃsā School – the difference

between Bhāgavata Saṁnyāsa and Smārta Saṁnyāsa – points of similarity between the two – the ancientness of the Vedic Karma-Yoga in the Manu-Smṛti and of the Bhāgavata Doctrine – the meaning of the words used in the Gītā to show the close of a chapter – the wonderfulness of the Gītā, and the appropriateness of the three parts of the Prasthānatrayī' (p. 490) – a concise statement in a tabular form showing the points of difference and similarity between the Saṁnyāsa (Sāṁkhya), and Karma-Yoga (Yoga) – the different ways of leading one's life – the doctrine of the Gītā that Karma-Yoga is the best of all – hymns (mantra) from the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad in support of this proposition – a consideration of the Śāṁkarabhāṣya on those hymns – authorities from the Manu and other Smṛtis in support of the fusion of Knowledge and Action ... .. [p. 416 - 509](#)

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## **CHAPTER XII. SIDDHĀVASTHĀ AND VYAVAHĀRA.**

(The State of a Perfect, and Worldly Affairs)

The perfect state of society – in this state, everyone is a Steady-in-Mind (sthitaprajña) – the climax of Morality – the Sthitaprajña according to Western Philosophy – the state of a Sthitaprajña, which is beyond laws – the behaviour of the Karma-yogin Sthitaprajña is the climax of Morality – the difference between the Morality of a selfish society, and the



Absolute Ethics in the State of Perfection – the description of the best of men according to the Dāsabodha – but, the immutability of Ethical principles is not affected by this difference (p. 526) – on what basis this difference is observed by the Sthitaprajña – the welfare or happiness of society, or the benefit of all living beings – but Equability of Reason (sāmya-buddhi) is superior to these external considerations – a comparison of the doctrine of Equability of Reason with the theory of 'the greatest good of the greatest number' – living in the world with Equability of Reason – philanthropy and one's own maintenance – Self-Identification (ātmaupamya) – the comprehensiveness, importance, and logical explanation of that doctrine – "the universe is the family" ('vasudhaiva-kuṭumbakam') (p. 544) – though one might acquire Equability of Reason, one cannot give the go-bye to considerations of who is deserving and who not – absence of enmity (nirvaira) does not mean inactivity, or non-resistance – 'measure for measure' – the restraint of evil-doers – the justification of patriotism, clan- pride etc. – observing the limits of Time and Place, and Self- defence – the duty of the Jñānin (scient) – universal welfare and Karma-Yoga – summary of the subject – self-interest, other's-interest, and the highest interest (paramārtha).... .. [p. 510 - 565](#)

### **CHAPTER XIII. BHAKTI-MĀRGA.(The Path of Devotion.)**

The difficulty of ordinary persons of small intelligence in  
Realising the qualityless form of the Brahman – the means of

acquiring Knowledge, Religious Faith (śraddhā) and Reason – both these are mutually dependent – the accomplishment of practical purposes by Faith – though one may acquire Knowledge of the Parameśvara by Faith, that is not enough– in order to be able to assimilate that Knowledge, it is necessary to contemplate on the Parameśvara with an intense and desireless love – this is called DEVOTION – the Contemplation of the Qualityful Imperceptible, is laborious and difficult of achievement – therefore, it is necessary to have some definite object for worship – the Path of Knowledge and the Path of Devotion lead to the same goal – nevertheless, Devotion cannot become a Niṣṭha like Knowledge – the visible form of the Parameśvara, accessible by love, which is taken for Devotion – the meaning of the word 'pratīka' – the meaning of the words 'rāja-vidyā' and 'rāja-guhya' – the lovingness in the Gītā (p. 585) – any one of the innumerable manifestations of the Parameśvara can be taken as a symbol (pratīka) – different symbols taken by different people and the resulting confusion – how that can be avoided – the difference between the symbol (pratīka) and the belief with which one worships the symbol – whatever the symbol is, the result obtained is according to one's belief about it – worship of different deities – but the One who gives the Fruit is the Parameśvara and not the deity – whichever deity is worshipped, that becomes an

informal worship of the Parameśvara – the superiority of the Path of Devotion in the Gītā from this point of view – the purity or impurity of Devotion and Love – improvement takes place by gradual degrees, as a result of industry, and perfection is reached after many births – that man who has neither Faith nor Reason is lost – whether by Reason or by Devotion, the knowledge of the same Non-Dual Brahman is obtained (p. 601) – all the doctrines pertaining to the theory of Causality (karma-vipāka-prakriyā) and the Philosophy of the Absolute Self, also stand good in the Path of Devotion – See, for instance, the form of the Personal Self ('jīva'), and of the Parameśvara according to the Gītā– nevertheless, there is sometimes a verbal difference in these doctrines – for instance, Karma now becomes the same as the Parameśvara – dedication to the Brahman (brahmārpaṇa) and dedication to Kṛṣṇa

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(kṛṣṇārpaṇa) – but these verbal differences are not made, if confusion results – the fusion of Faith and Spiritual Knowledge in the Gītā Religion – there is no room for 'Saṁnyāsa' in the Path of Devotion – there is no conflict between Devotion (bhakti) and Action (karma) – devotees of the Blessed Lord and Universal Welfare – worship of and sacrifice to the Blessed Lord by one's own Actions only – whereas the Path of Knowledge is open to the three re-generate classes, the Path

of Devotion is open to women and to Śūdras etc. – there is Release, even if one surrenders oneself to the Parameśvara at the time of death – the superiority of the Religion of the Gītā over other religions ... .. [p. 566 - 618](#)

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# DETAILED Contents of chapters XIV and XV and of the Appendices,

which are included in the Second Volume of the Book.

## CHAPTER XIV. GĪTĀDHYĀYA-SAMGATI

(The Continuity of the Chapters of the Gītā).

Two methods of proving a subject – scientific and catechistic – the good and the bad aspects of the catechistic method – the beginning of the Gītā – the first chapter – in the second chapter, the subject-matter starts with only two Paths of life, namely, the Sāṁkhya and the Yoga – the exposition of Karma-Yoga in the third, fourth and fifth chapter – Equability of Reason (sāmya-buddhi) is better than Karma – it is impossible to get rid of Karma – Karma-yoga is superior to Sāṁkhya Niṣṭhā – the necessity of tie control of all organs in order to attain Equability of Reason (sāmya-buddhi) – the method of control of the organs mentioned in the sixth, chapter – it is not proper to divide the Gītā into the three parts, Action (Karma), Devotion (bhakti) and Knowledge (jñāna) – Knowledge and Devotion are the means, of attaining Equability of Reason. according to the Karma-Yoga – therefore, the Gītā cannot be divided into three six-chaptered parts, one part for 'tvam,' one for 'tat' and one for 'om' – the exposition of 'jñāna' and 'vijñāna' is given in chapters VII to XII, for the successful

practice of Karma-Yoga, and not independently – a summary of chapters VII to XII– even in these chapters of the Gītā, Devotion and Knowledge have not been dealt with, independently, but are intermingled with each other, and they have been given the single name 'jñāna-vijñāna' – a summary of chapters XIII to XVII – the summing up in the eighteenth chapter is in support of Karma-Yoga – therefore, considering the introductory and final chapters (upakrama-upasāmhāra) according to rules of the Mīmāṃsā, Karma-Yoga is seen to be the doctrine propounded by the Gītā– the four-fold goal of human life (puruṣārtha)– 'artha' (wealth) and 'kāma' (Desire) must be consistent with

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'dharma' (Morality) – but Release (mokṣa) is not in conflict with Morality (dharma) – how the Gītā came to be explained away as supporting Renunciation – Is not Sāṃkhya + Desireless Action = Karma-Yoga, to be found in the Gītā? – nevertheless Karma-Yoga is the doctrine ultimately expounded – prayer to the followers of the Path of Renunciation ... [p. 621 - 663](#)

## **CHAPTER. XV. UPASĀMHĀRA.**

(Resume or Summary)

Difference between the science of Karma-Yoga and the formulating of rules of Worldly Morality (ācāra-saṃgraha) –

the erroneous idea that Ethics cannot be properly justified by Vedānta – Gītā does that very thing – the Exposition of the religion of the Gītā solely from the point of view of Ethics- Reason is superior to Karma – the Nakulopākhyāna – similar theorems in Buddhism and Christianity – comparison of the doctrine of Equability of Reason in the Gītā, with the two Western doctrines of 'greatest good of the greatest number' and 'Conscience' – similarity between Western Metaphysics and the Exposition in the Gītā – the doctrines of Kant and Green – Vedānta and Ethics – the reason why there are various codes of Ethics, and differences of opinion about the construction of the Body and the Cosmos – the important part of the Metaphysical exposition in the Gītā – the harmonising of Release (mokṣa), Ethics and worldly life – Renunciation according to Christianity – the Western idea of Action based on the search for Happiness – comparison of the same with the Karma-mārga in the Gītā – difference between the arrangement of the four castes and Ethics – the Western Karma-mārga is based on elimination of pain, and the Gītā religion is based on Desirelessness – a short history of the Karma-Yoga in the Kaliyuga – Jain and Buddhist monks – the Saṁnyāsin followers of Śaṁkarācārya – the Mahomedan rule – the Devotees of the Blessed Lord, the galaxy of saints, and Rāmadāsa – the living- ness of the Gītā religion – the fearlessness, immutability, and equality of the Gītā religion – prayer to the Almighty ... .. [p.664 - 714](#)

## **APPENDICES.**

### **An External Examination of the Gītā.**

The Gītā has been included in the Mahābhārata for a proper reason and at a proper place, it is not spurious nor interpolated—

### **PART I: the useful purpose of the GĪTĀ and the**

**MAHĀBHĀRATA**— the present form of the Gītā – the present form of the Mahābhārata – the seven references in the Mahābhārata to the Gītā – similar stanzas and similarity of language in both – also similarity of meaning – which proves that the Gītā and the Mahābhārata were written by the same author –

### **PART II: A comparison of the GĪTĀ and the**

**UPANIṢADS** – similarity of language and similarity of meaning – the Metaphysical Knowledge in the Gītā is taken from the- Upaniṣads– the theory of Māyā (Illusion) in the Upaniṣads and in the Gītā – What the Gītā contains more than the Upaniṣads– the consistency between the Sāṃkhya system and- Vedānta – the worship of the Perceptible or the Path of Devotion – but the most important subject is the exposition of the Path of Karma-Yoga – the Yoga mentioned in the Gītā for the control of the organs, the Pātāñjala Yoga, and the Upaniṣads –



PART III:– Which, was first in point of time, the GĪTĀ or the BRAHMA-SUTRAS?– the clear reference to the Brahma-Sūtras in the Gītā – the repeated reference in the Brahma-Sūtras to the Gītā. by the word 'Smṛti'–a consideration of the relative chronological position of the two books – the Brahma-Sūtras are either contemporary with or prior in point of time to the present Gītā., but not subsequent – one sound reason for the Brahma-Sūtras being referred to in the Gītā –

#### PART IV:– The RISE of the BHĀGAVATA

DOCTRINE and the GĪTĀ – the Path of Devotion in the Gītā is consistent with Vedānta, Sāṃkhya and Yoga – it is not that the doctrines of Vedānta have been subsequently inserted in the Gītā- the most ancient form of the Vedic religion is pre-eminently for Action – the subsequent growth of Vedānta, Sāṃkhya, and Renunciation – the harmonisation of the two Paths of life had been arrived at already in ancient times – the subsequent growth of Devotion – the consequent necessity for making: Devotion consistent, from its very inception, with the former paths of life– that is the trend of the Bhāgavata doctrine, and

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also of the Gītā – the combination of Spiritual Knowledge with Action in the Gītā is from the Upaniṣads, but there is the addition of Devotion – the ancient treatises on the Bhāgavata

doctrine, the Gītā and the Nārāyaṇīyopākhyāna – the date of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and of the growth of the Sātvata or Bhāgavata religion is the same – that time, is about 700 to 800 years before Buddha, or about 1500 years before Christ– the reasons for thinking so – the impossible position arising out of a different conclusion– the original aspect of the Bhāgavata religion supports Inaction– the next aspect is Devotional – and the final aspect is for Qualified Monism (Viśiṣṭādvaita)– the original Gītā is about 900 years before Christ –

**PART V:– THE DATE OF THE PRESENT GĪTĀ** – the date of the present Gītā is the same as of the present Mahābhārata – out of these, the present Mahābhārata is prior in point of time to Bhāsa, Aśvaghōṣa Āśvalāyana, Alexander, and the method of starting the year with the Sun in Aries (Meṣa), but subsequent to Buddha; so it is about 500 years prior to the Saka era – the present Gītā is prior in point of time to Kālidāsa, Bāṇabhatta, the dramatist Bhāsa, the Purāṇas, Baudhāyana, and the Mahayana sect in Buddhism, that is, about 500 years before the Śaka era –

**PART VI: GĪTĀ and the BUDDHIST LITERATURE –** the similarity between the description of the 'Sthitaprajña' in the Gītā and the 'Arhata' of Buddhism – the nature of the Buddhist religion, and its growth out of the previous Brahmin religion – Buddha has discarded the doctrine of the Ātman in the Upaniṣads, and has adopted only a course of conduct consistent with Renunciation (*nivṛtti*) – the visible reasons for

this Path of life according to the Buddhist religion, or the four ārya truths – the similarity between the Vedic Smārta religion, and the duties of a householder according to Buddhism – all these ideas are originally from the Vedic religion – the reason, nevertheless, for considering the Mahābhārata and the Gītā independently – the improbability of the subsequent Devotional Buddhist religion having been evolved out of the original Renunciatory Buddhist religion, which denied the existence of the Ātman – the growth of the Mahāyāna Sect – reasons for concluding that the Path of Devotion based on Action (*pravṛtti*) in the Mahāyāna creed has been

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adopted from the Gītā, and the consequent conclusion as to the date of the Gītā –

PART VII:- GĪTĀ and the CHRISTIAN BIBLE – the improbability of the Gītā having adopted any principle from the Christian religion – the Christian religion is not a gradual and independent development out of the Jewish religion – opinions of old Christian scholars as to how it came into existence – the Esin sect and Greek philosophy – the astonishing similarity between the Buddhist and Christian religions – but the priority in point of time of the Buddhist religion is undoubted – evidence in support of the fact that the Buddhist monks (*yatin*) had entered Jewish territory in ancient

times – the high probability, therefore, of the elementary principles of Christianity having been adopted from Buddhism, and consequently from the Vedic religion or from the Gītā– the resulting irresistible conclusion as to the undoubted antiquity of the Gītā.

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# ABBREVIATIONS

Explanation of the Abbreviations used in the Gītā- Rahasya, and information about the treatises referred to by the Abbreviations.

NOTE:— These are not in the same order as in the original, as they have been re-arranged according to the English Alphabet, whereas in the original, they are arranged according to the Marathi Alphabet ~Translator.

Ai. Brā. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa; pañcikā and khaṇḍa, (Dr. Houda's Edition).

Ai. or Ai. U. Aitareyopaniṣad; chapter, khaṇḍa and stanza (Anandasrama Edition).

Aṣṭā. Aṣṭāvakra-gītā; chapter and stanza, (Gītā-Saṁgraha published by Messrs. Ashtekar & Co.)

Atharva. Atharvaveda; the figures after this show respectively, the khaṇḍa, the sūkta, and the ṛcā.

Bhāg. Śrīmad Bhāgavatpurāṇa, (Nirṇaya-Sagara Edition).

Bhā. Jyo. Bhāratiya Jyotiḥ Śāstra (Written by the late Balkrishna Dikshit).

Br. or Br̥ha. Br̥hadāraṇyakopaniṣat; adhyāya, brāhmaṇa and mantra (Anandasrama Edition). The usual reference is to the Kaṇvapāṭha, but in one place, there is a reference to the Mādhyandina-śākhā.

Bra. Sū. See. Ve. Sū. below.

Chān. Chāndogyopaniṣat; chapter, khaṇḍa and mantra.  
(Anandasrama Edition),

Dā. or Dāsa. The Dāsabodha of Śrī Samartha (Edition of the  
Satkaryottejaka Sabha, Dhulia).

Gā. Tukārāma's Gāthā (Damodar Savlarama's Edition, 1900).

Gī. Bhagavadgītā, chapter and stanza; Gī. Śāṁ. Bhā.; Gītā  
Śāṁkarabhāṣya. Gītā. Rā. Bhā , Gītā Rāmānujabhāṣya. The  
Anandasrama Edition of the Gītā and of the Śāṁkarabhāṣya  
contains at the end a glossary, which I have found very useful;  
and I am very grateful for it to the compiler. The  
Rāmānujabhāṣya is the one printed in the Venkatesvara Press;  
The Mādhvabhāṣya is the one printed by Krishnacharya of  
Kumbhakonam; The Ānandagiri Commentary, and the  
Paramātha-prapā, are those printed in the Jagadhitecchu

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Press; the Madhusūdana Commentary is the one printed in the  
Native Opinion Press; the Śrīdharī and Vāmanī (Marathi)  
Commentaries are those printed in the Nirnayasagara Press;  
the Paśācabhāṣya is the one printed in the Anandasrama  
Press; the Tattvadīpikā of the Vallabha school is the one  
printed in the Guzarati Printing Press; the Nīlakaṇṭhī is from  
the Bombay Mahābhārata; and the Brahmānandī is the one  
printed in Madras; these are the commentaries of which I have

made use. But, as the Guzarati Printing Press has recently published together in one volume all these commentaries except the Paiśācabhāṣya and the Brahmānandī, as also the commentary of the Nimbārka School and some other commentaries, in all fifteen, that one volume is now sufficient for all needs.

Gī. Ra. Or Gītā Ra. Gītā Rahasya. The first essay of this book. Hari, Harivaṁśa; parva, chapter and stanza (Bombay Edition).  
Īśā. Īśāvāsyopaniṣat. (Anandasrama Edition).

Jai. Sū. The Mīmāṃsā-Sūtras of Jaimini; chapter, pāda, and sūtra. (Calcutta Edition).

Jñā. Jñāneśvarī with translation; Indira Press Edition.

Ka. or Kaṭha. Kaṭhopaniṣat; vallī and mantra (Anandasrama Edition).

Kai. Kaivalyopaniṣat; khaṇḍa and mantra; Twenty-eight Upaniṣads (Nirnaya-Sagara Edition).

Kauṣī. Kauṣītakyupaniṣat or Kauṣītakī Brāhmaṇopaniṣat; chapter and khaṇḍa; sometimes the first chapter of this Upaniṣad is referred to as the third chapter according to the order of the Brāhmaṇas; (Anandasrama Edition).

Kena. Kenopaniṣat (= Talavakāropaniṣat), khaṇḍa and mantra (Anandasrama Edition).

Ma. Bhā. Śrīman Mahābhārata. The following letter shows the various Parvas, and the numbers are of the chapters and the stanzas. I have everywhere used the Sanskrit Edition published

at Calcutta by Babu Pratapchandra Roy. If the same stanzas have to be referred to in the Bombay edition, they will be found a little in advance or behind.

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Maitryu. Maitryupaniṣat or Maitrāṇyupaniṣat; prapāṭhaka and mantra (Anandasrama Edition)

Manu. Manu-Smṛti, chapter and stanza. (Dr. Jolly's Edition; but in the Maudalik's or in any other edition, these stanzas will mostly be found in the same places; the commentaries on Manu are from the Maudalik edition).

Matsya. Matsya-Purāṇa (Anandasrama Edition).

Mi. Pra. Milinda Praśna, Pali text, English translation. (Sacred Books of the East Series).

Muṇ. or Muṇḍa. Muṇḍakopaniṣat; Muṇḍaka, khaṇḍa and mantra (Anandasrama Edition).

Nār. Pañ. Nārada Pañcarātra. (Calcutta edition).

Nā. Sū. Nārada-Sūtras (Bombay edition).

Nṛsimha. U. Nṛsimhottara tāpanīyopaniṣat.

Pañca. Pañcadaśī with commentary (Nirnaya-Sagara Edition).

Pātañjala-Sū. Pātañjala-Yoga-Sūtras. (Tukarama Tatya's Edition).

Praśna. Praśnopaniṣat; praśna and mantra. (Anandasrama Edition),



Ṛg. Ṛg-veda; maṇḍala, sūkta, and ṛcā.

Rāmapū. Rāmapūrvatāpanīyopaniṣat (Anandasrama Edition),  
S. B. E. Sacred Books of East Series.

Sām. Kā. Sāmkhya Kārikā (Tukarama Tatya's Edition).

Śān. Sū. Śāṇḍilya-Sūtras (Bombay Edition).

Śiva. Śiva-gītā; chapter and stanza; (Gītā-Saṁgraha of Messrs.  
Ashtekar & Co.,

Sūrya. Gī. Sūrya-Gītā; chapter and stanza, (Madras Edition).

Śve. Śvetāśvataropaniṣat; chapter and mantra (Anandasrama  
Edition).

Tai. or Tai. U. Taittirīya Upaniṣat; vallī, anuvāka, and mantra  
(Anandasrama Edition).

Tai. Brā. Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa; kāṇḍa, prapāṭhaka, anuvāka and  
mantra (Anandasrama Edition).

Tai. Saṁ. Taittirīya Saṁhitā; kāṇḍa, prapāṭhaka, anuvāka and  
mantra

Tukā. Gā. Tukārāma's Gāthā; See Gā. above.

Vāja. Saṁ. Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā; chapter and mantra (Bebar  
Edition).

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Vālmīki Rā. Or Vā. Rā. Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa; kāṇḍa, chapter and  
stanza (Bombay Edition).

Ve. Sū. Vedānta-Sūtras or Brahma-Sūtras; chapter, pāda, and sūtra.

Ve. Sū. Śāṁ. Bhā. Śāṁkarabhāṣya on the Vedānta-Sūtras; the Anandasrama Edition has been used everywhere.

Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu-Purāṇa; aṁśa, chapter, and stanza (Bombay Edition).

Yajña. Yājñavalkya-Smṛti; chapter and stanza (Bombay Edition); I have in one or two places referred to the Aparārka commentary (Bombay Edition) on this.

Yo. Or Yoga. Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha; chapter, sarga, and stanza. There are two sub-divisions, Pū. (pūrvārdha) and U. (uttarārdha) of the sixth chapter (Commentated Nirṇaya-Sagara Edition).

NOTE:— Besides these, there are many Sanskrit, English, Marathi, and Pali treatises, which have been mentioned in various places; but as a general rule, the names of those books have been given in full, wherever they occur, or they have been mentioned in such a way as to be easily intelligible; and they have, therefore, not been mentioned in the above list.

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**ŚRĪ GAṆEŚĀYA NAMAḤ**

**OM TAT SAT**

**ŚRĪMAD BHAGAVAD  
GĪTĀ RAHASYA.**

**OR**

**THE PHILOSOPHY OF  
ENERGISM  
(PROPER ACTION)**

# CHAPTER I.

## INTRODUCTORY

Nārāyaṇaṁ namaskṛtya naraṁ caiva narottamam ।

Devīm Saraśvatīm Vyāsaṁ tato jayam udīrayet ॥ [1]

~ Mahābhārata (Opening Verse)

The Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā is one of the most brilliant and pure gems of our ancient sacred books. It would be difficult to find a

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- [1] This verse means that one should first offer obeisance to Nārāyaṇa, to Nara, the most excellent among men, to Devī Saraśvatī, and to Vyāsa and then begin to recite the "Jaya", that is, the Mahābhārata. The two Ṛṣis Nara and Nārāyaṇa were the two components into which the Paramātman had broken itself up and Arjuna and Śrī Kṛṣṇa were their later incarnations, as has been stated in the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. U. 48.7 – 9 and 20 – 22; and Vana. 12.44 – 46). As these two Ṛṣis were the promulgators of the Nārāyaṇīya or the Bhāgavata religion, consisting of Desireless Action, they are first worshipped in all the treatises on the Bhāgavata religion. In some readings, the word 'caiva' is used instead of 'Vyāsa' as in this verse, but I do not think that is correct; because, although Nara and Nārāyaṇa were the promulgators of the Bhāgavata religion, yet I think it only proper that Vyāsa, who wrote both the Bhārata and the Gītā, which are the two principal works relating to this religion, should also be worshipped in the beginning of the book. "Jaya" is the ancient name for the Mahābhārata.

simpler work in Sanskrit literature or even in all the literature of the world than the Gītā, which explains to us in an unambiguous and succinct manner the deep and sacred principles of the sacred science of the SELF (Ātman), after imparting to us the knowledge of the human body and the cosmos, and on the authority of those principles acquaints every human being with the most perfect and complete condition of the Self, that is to say, with what the highest-manhood is, and which further establishes a logical and admirable harmony between Devotion (*bhakti*) and Spiritual Knowledge (*jñāna*), and ultimately between both these and the duties of ordinary life enjoined by the Śāstras, thereby inspiring the mind, bewildered by the vicissitudes of life to calmly and, what is more, desirelessly adhere to the path of duty. Even

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if one examines the work looking upon it as a poem, this work, which simplifies to every reader, young or old, the numerous abstruse doctrines of Self-Knowledge in inspired language and is replete with the sweetness of Devotion plus Self-Realisation, will certainly be looked upon as an excellent poem. The pre-eminent worth, therefore, of a book which contains the quintessence of Vedic religion, uttered by the voice of the Blessed Lord can best only be imagined. It is stated at the

commencement of the Anugītā, that after the Bhārata war was over, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were one day chatting together, Arjuna conceiving the desire of hearing the Gītā again from the lips of the Blessed Lord, said to Śrī Kṛṣṇa:– "I have forgotten the advice you gave me when the war commenced; so, please repeat it to me." In reply the Blessed Lord said to him that even He could not repeat that advice in the same way, because on the previous occasion the advice had been given, when His mind was in the highest Yogic state (Ma. Bhā. Aśvamedha. 16, stanzas 10 – 13). Really speaking, nothing was impossible for the Blessed Lord, but His answer that it would be impossible for Him to repeat the Gītā, clearly reveals the excellent worth of the Gītā. The fact that the Gītā is considered by all the different traditionary schools of the Vedic religion for over twenty-five centuries to be as venerable and authoritative as the Vedas themselves is due to the same

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cause; and on the same account, this work, which is as old as the Smṛtis, has been appropriately, though figuratively described in the Gītā-dhyāna as follows:–

sarvopaniṣado gāvo dogdhā Gopālanandanaḥ ।

Pārtho vatsaḥ sudhīr bhoktā dugdham Gītāmṛtaṁ mahat ॥

that is:— "All the Upaniṣads are, so to say, cows, the Blessed Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Himself the drawer of the milk (milk-man), the intelligent Arjuna is the drinker, the calf (which causes the flow of the milk in the cows), and (when these unprecedented circumstances have come about) the milk which has been drawn, is the Gītā-nectar of the highest order. "It cannot, therefore, be a matter of surprise that any number of translations, commentaries, or expositions of this work have appeared in all the vernacular languages of India; but, after the Westerners have got acquainted with Sanskrit, there have been made any number of translations of the Gītā into Greek, Latin, German, French, English etc., and this wonderful work has now come to be known throughout the world.

Not only does this work contain the quintessence of all the Upaniṣads, but the full name of this work is "Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā Upaniṣat". The enunciative words, conveying that the chapter is closed, which are used at the end of each chapter of the Gītā contain the words "iti Śrīmad Bhagavadgītāsu Upaniṣatsu Brahnavidyāyām yogaśāstre Śrī-Kṛṣṇārjuna-saṁvade" etc. i.e., "thus the conversation between Śrī-Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Karma-yoga science, (that is to say, on the science of the yoga based on the knowledge of the Brahman) in the Upaniṣad sung by the Blessed Lord." Although these enunciative words are not to be found in the original Bhārata, yet as we find them in all the editions of the Gītā, one may draw the inference that, that mode of enunciation must

have come into vogue, when the Gītā was for the first time separated from the Mahābhārata for daily recital, that is to say, before any commentary was written on it; and I shall explain later on the importance of these words in determining the import of the Gītā from this point of view. For the present, it is necessary for us to consider only the words

"*Bhagavadgītāsu Upaniṣatsu*." Although the word "Upaniṣat" is of the neuter

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gender in the Marathi language, yet as it is of the feminine gender in Sanskrit, so the idea "the Upaniṣad sung, that is, told by the Blessed Lord" is conveyed, in Sanskrit, by the expression "Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā Upaniṣat", a compound of an adjective and a noun in the feminine gender; and although the work is singular in number, yet as it has become customary to refer to it in the plural number by way of respect, one comes across the plural seventh-case-ended form of "Śrīmad Bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu". Even in the commentary (bhāṣya) written by Śaṁkarācārya, we come across the expression "itī gītāsu" in the plural number with reference to this work. But in contracting the expression, the affixes or words used for indicating respect and also the common-noun at the end, indicative of a class, being dropped, the two first-case-ended singular words "Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā" and "Upaniṣat" have at



first been changed into "Bhagavadgītā" and later on merely "Gītā", which is a feminine and extensively contracted form, – as has been the case with the names Kena, Kaṭha, Chāndogya etc., If the word "Upaniṣat" had not occurred in the original name, then the name of this work would have been contracted into the neuter form "Bhagavadgītām" or merely "Gītām" as has been the case with "Bhāgavataṁ" or "Bhārataṁ" or "Gopīgītām", but as, instead of that, the word has remained in the feminine form as "Bhagavadgītā," or "Gītā," we must always take the word "Upaniṣat" as implied after it. The word "Anugītā" has been interpreted in the same way in the commentary of Arjunamiśra on the Anugītā.

But we find that the word "Gītā" is applied not only to the Bhagavadgītā of 700 verses but also in an ordinary meaning to many other works dealing with Spiritual Knowledge. For instance, in certain sundry chapters of the Mokṣaparva included in the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata, we find that the names Piṅgalagītā, Śāmpākagītā, Mankigītā, Bodhyagītā, Vicakṣhyugītā, Hāritagītā, Vṛtragītā, Parāśaragītā, and Haṁsagītā have been used and one part of the Anugītā in the Aśvamedhaparva has been called by the separate and special name of "Brāhmaṇagītā". Besides these, there are also numerous other gītās which are well-known, such as the

Avadhūtagītā, Aṣṭāvakragītā, Īśvaragītā, Uttaragītā, Kapilagītā, Gaṇeśagītā, Devīgītā, Pāṇḍavagītā, Brahmagītā, Bhikṣugītā, Yamagītā, Rāmagītā, Vyāsagītā, Śivagītā, Sūtagītā, Sūryagītā, etc. Some of these exist independently, whereas the others are to be found in different Purāṇas. For instance, the Gaṇeśagītā, is to be found at the end of the Gaṇeśapurāṇa in the Kṛīḍā-khaṇḍa in the 138th to 148th chapters and one may say that it is a faithful copy of the Bhagavadgītā, with slight verbal differences. The Īśvaragītā is to be found in the first eleven chapters in the Uttaravibhāga of the Kūrmapurāṇa, and the Vyāsagītā starts in the next chapter. The Brahmagītā is to be found in the first twelve chapters of the latter portion of the fourth i.e., the Yajña-vaibhava khanda of the Sūta-Saṃhitā included in the Skandapurāṇa and the Sūtagītā is in the subsequent eight chapters. There is to be found a Brahmagītā different from this Brahmagītā of the Skandapurāṇa, in the 173rd to 181st stanzas of the latter half of the chapter on "Nirvāṇa", in the Yogavāśiṣṭha. The Yamagītā is of three kinds. The first is to be found in the seventh chapter of the 3rd part (aṃśa) of the Viṣṇupurāṇa, the second one in the 381st chapter of the 3rd division (khaṇḍa) of the Agnipurāṇa and the third one in the 8th chapter of Nṛsimhapurāṇa. The same is the case with the Rāmagītā. The Rāmagītā which is in common acceptance in this part of the country is to be found in the fifth sarga of the Uttarakāṇḍa of the Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa and this Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa is looked upon as a part of the

Brahmāṇḍapurāṇa. But there is also another Rāmagītā to be found in the work known as "Gurujñāna-vāsiṣṭha-tattvasārāyaṇa" which is well-known on the Madras side. This book deals with Vedānta philosophy and is divided into three divisions (khaṇḍas) called the Jñāna, Upāsanā, and Karma. In the first eighteen chapters of the second part (pāda) called the Upāsanākāṇḍa, we find the Rāmagītā and in the first five chapters of the third part (pāda) of the third kāṇḍa, called the Karmakāṇḍa, we find the Sūryagītā. The Śivagītā is said to be in the Pātālakhaṇḍa of the Padmapurāṇa. But, in the edition of this purāṇa which has been printed in the Anandashrama Press in Poona, we do not find the Śivagītā. Pandit Jwalaprasad has stated in his book called Aṣṭādaśa-

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purāṇadarśana (Survey of the eighteen Purāṇas) that it is to be found in the Gauḍīya Padmottarapurāṇa, and in the table of contents of the Padmapurāṇa which is given along with those of other Purāṇas in the Nārada-purāṇa, we find a reference to the Śivagītā. Besides these, the Haṁsagītā is to be found in the 13th chapter of the 11th skandha of the Śrī Bhāgavatpurāṇa and the Bhikṣugītā is to be found in the 23rd chapter of the same skandha,; and the Kāpileyopākhyāna contained in the chapters 23 to 33 of the third skandha, is also known as Kapilagītā. But I have seen an independent printed book by the name Kapilagītā. This Kapilagītā deals principally with the

Haṭhayoga, and one finds it stated in it that it has been taken from the Padmapurāṇa; however, not only do we not find it in the Padmapurāṇa, but as we find in it in one place (4.7) such words as "Jaina" "Jaṅgama" (liṅgāita), and "Sophi" (a Mahomedan saint), we have to say that it must have been written after the Mahomedan rule commenced. As in the Bhāgavatpurāṇa, so also in the Devībhāgavata, we find a Gītā from the 31st to the 40th chapters of the seventh skandha, and as that gītā is supposed to have come out of the mouth of the Devi, it is called the "Devīgītā". Besides these, a summary of the Bhagavadgītā itself is to be found in the 380th chapter of the third khaṇḍa, of the Agnipurāṇa as also in the 247th chapter of the pūrvakhaṇḍa of the Garuḍapurāṇa. In the same way, although it is stated that the work "Yogavāsīṣṭha" was recited by Vāsīṣṭha to Rāma in the Rāma incarnation, yet we find a summary of the Bhagavadgītā, which was preached to Arjuna by the Blessed Lord in the subsequent Kṛṣṇa incarnation, reproduced in the last, that is, in the Nirvāṇa chapter, in which many verses are taken as they are from Bhagavadgītā, and it is given the name "Arjunopākhyāna" (Cf. Yoga. 6, Pū. Sarga. 52 – 58). I have stated above that the Śivagītā is not to be found in the Padmapurāṇa printed at Poona, but though that is so, yet a Bhagavadgītā-māhātmya is described from the 171st to the 188th chapters of the Uttarakhaṇḍa of this edition (of the Padmapurāṇa), and one chapter of this māhātmya is dedicated to each chapter of the

Bhagavadgītā and it also contains traditionary stories about the same. There is besides one

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Gītā-māhātmya in the Varāhapurāṇa and it is said that there is also a third Gītā-māhātmya in the Śaiva or Vāyupurāṇa. But I do not come across it in the Vāyupurāṇa printed in Calcutta. A small chapter of nine verses called "Gītā-dhyāna" is to be found printed in the beginning of the printed editions of the Bhagavadgītā, but I cannot say from where it has been taken. Nevertheless, the verse "Bhīṣmadroṇa-taṭā Jayadratha-jalā" (from these nine verses) is to be found, with slight verbal differences, at the very commencement of the recently published drama of Bhāsa called "Ūrubhaṅga". Therefore, it would seem that this Gītā-dhyāna must have come into vogue probably after the date of the dramatist Bhāsa. Because, it would be more proper to say that the Gītā-dhyāna has been prepared by borrowing different verses from different texts and writing some new verses, rather than to say that a well-known dramatist like Bhāsa has taken that verse from the Gītā-dhyāna. As the dramatist Bhāsa lived before Kālidāsa, his date cannot at most be later than Śaka 300. [1]

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[1] Most of the above-mentioned Gītās and also several other Gītās (including the Bhagavadgītā) have been printed by Mr. Hari Raghunath Bhagwat.

From what has been stated above, one can understand which and how many copies, and good or bad imitations; summaries and m  h  tmyas of the G  t   are to be found in the pur    as. One cannot definitely say to what pur    as some g  t  s like the Avadh  tag  t  , the A    avakrag  t  , etc., belong and if they do not form part of any pur    as, then by whom and when they were independently written. Yet, if one considers the arrangement or the disposition of subject matters, in all these g  t  s, one will see that all these works must have been written after the Bhagavadg  t   had come into, prominence and acquired general acceptance. Nay, one may even go further and say that these various g  t  s have been, brought into existence with the idea that the sacred literature of a particular sect or a pur    a does not become complete unless it contains a g  t   similar to the Bhagavadg  t  . As in the Bhagavadg  t  , the Blessed Lord first showed to Arjuna his. Cosmic Form and then preached to him the Divine Knowledge,

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so also is the case with the   ivag  t   and Dev  g  t  , or the Ga  e  ag  t  ; and in the   ivag  t  ,    varag  t  , etc., we find many verses taken literally from the Bhagavadg  t  . Considering the matter from the point of view of Spiritual Knowledge, these various g  t  s do not contain anything more than the

Bhagavadgītā; but, what is more, the wonderful skill of establishing a harmony between the Realisation of the Highest Self (adhyātma) and Action (karma) which is seen in the Bhagavadgītā, is not to be found in any one of these gītās. Somebody has subsequently written the Uttara-gītā as a supplement to the Bhagavadgītā in the form of a conversation between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, in the belief that the Pātañjala-yoga or the Haṭha-yoga or the Philosophy of Renunciation (saṁnyāsa) by Abandonment of Action (karma) has not been sufficiently well described in the Bhagavadgītā, and the Avadhūta, the Aṣṭāvakra and some other gītās are purely one-sided, that is to say, they are only in support of the path of Renunciation; and the Yamagītā, Pāṇḍavagītā, and some other gītās are very small and purely devotional, like eulogistic hymns. It is true that the same is not the case with the Śivagītā, the Gaṇeśagītā and the Sūryagītā and they contain a skilful harmonising of Action and Spiritual Knowledge; yet, as that exposition in them has been more or less adopted from the Bhagavadgītā there is no novelty about them. Therefore, these paurāṇic stale gītās which have come into existence later on, fall into the shade before the profound and comprehensive brilliance of the Bhagavadgītā and the excellence of the Bhagavadgītā has been all the more established and enhanced by these imitation gītās; and the word "gītā" has come to mean Bhagavadgītā principally. Although the works Adhyātma Rāmāyaṇa and Yogavāsiṣṭha are more exhaustive, yet from their construction, they are evidently of a later date. The

Gurujñānavāsiṣṭha-tattvasārāyaṇa of the Madras Presidency is a very ancient work according to some, but I am not of that opinion, because it contains a reference to 108 Upaniṣads and it cannot be said that all of them are ancient; and if one considers the Sūryagītā, we find in it a reference (see 3.30) to Qualified-Monism (viśiṣṭādvaita), and in some places the arguments too seem to have been adopted from

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the Bhagavadgītā (1.68), and therefore, one has to come to the conclusion that even this work was written much later on, possibly even after the date of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya.

Although there were many gītās, yet inasmuch as the Bhagavadgītā was of unquestionable excellence, as shown above, later philosophers, following the Vedic cult, thought it proper not to take much notice of the other gītās and to examine only the Bhagavadgītā and explain its import to their co-religionists. The examination of a work is of two kinds; there is the internal examination and the external examination. If one considers the book as a whole and extracts the inner meaning, the import, the implied meaning, or conclusions Bought to be proved by it, that is called the "internal examination". Considering where a particular work was written, who wrote it, what kind of language is used in it,



to what extent good sense or sweetness of sound are to be found in it from the poetical point of view, whether the diction of it is grammatically correct, or it contains any old archaic constructions, what opinions, places or personages are mentioned in it, and whether or not such references enable you to determine the date of the work or the social conditions availing at the time when the work was written, whether the ideas in the book are original or are borrowed from someone else, and if borrowed, then which they are, and from whom they are borrowed, etc. – which is an exposition of the purely external aspects of the book, – is called the "external examination" of the work. Those ancient commentators who have written commentaries (bhāṣya) or criticisms (ṭīkā) on the Gītā have not given much attention to these external aspects. Because, considering these matters, while examining a supernatural work like the Bhagavadgītā, would, in their opinion, be like wasting time in merely counting the petals of an excellent flower, instead of admiring its scent, colour or beauty or in criticising the combs of a honey-comb full of honey; but following the example of Western critics, modern scholars are now devoting much attention to the external examination of the Gītā. One of these has counted the archaic constructions in the Gītā and come to the conclusion that this work must have been written at least a few centuries before the birth of

Christ; and that, the doubt that the path of Devotion described, in the Gītā may have been adopted from the Christian religion (which was promulgated at a later date) is absolutely without foundation. Another scholar has taken it for granted that the atheistic opinions which have been mentioned in the 16th chapter of the Gītā, must, most probably, be Buddhistic, and come to the conclusion that the Gītā must have come into existence after the date of Buddha. Another scholar says that as in the verse "brahma-sūtra padaīś-caiva" in the 13th chapter, the Brahma-Sūtras have been mentioned, the Gītā must have been written after the date of Brahma-Sūtras; on the other- hand, several others say that as the Gītā has undoubtedly been taken as an authority in some places at least in the Brahma- Sūtras, one cannot imagine that the Gītā was later than the Brahma-Sūtras. Still other scholars say that there could have been no time for Śrī Kṛṣṇa to recite the Bhagavadgītā of 700 stanzas to Arjuna on the battle-field during the Bhārata war. In the hurry and scurry of the war, the most that Śrī Kṛṣṇa could have told Arjuna would be about 40 or 50 very important and crucial verses or the import of them and that the expansion of these verses must have been made later on when the story of the war was recited by Sañjaya to Dhṛtarāṣṭra or by Vyāsa to Śuka or by Vaiśampayāna to Janamejaya, or by Sūta to Śaunaka, or at least when the original Bhārata was expanded by someone into the 'Mahābhārata'. When such an idea has taken root in

the mind regarding the construction of the Gītā, scholars have taken to diving into the ocean of the Gītā and some scholars have declared seven [1] and others twenty-eight or thirty-six or one hundred verses to be the original verses of the Gītā. Some

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have even gone to the length of saying that there was no occasion whatsoever for explaining to Arjuna the philosophy of the Brahman on the battle-field and that this excellent treatise on the Vedānta philosophy has been interpolated by someone later on into the Mahābhārata. It is not that these questions of external examination are totally useless. For instance, let us take the illustration of the petals of the flower or of the honeycomb which was mentioned above. In classifying vegetables, it is very necessary to consider the petals of their flowers; and it has now been proved mathematically that there are to be found combs for storage of honey in a honeycomb which are made with the idea of economising as far as possible the

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[1] At present, there is one Gītā which consists only of seven verses, namely, the following:— (1) "Om ityekākṣaram Brahma etc." (Gī. 8.13); (2) "sthāne hṛṣīkeśa tava prakīrtyā etc." (Gī. 11.36) (3) "sarvataḥ pāṇīpādaṁ tat" etc. (Gī. 13.13); (4) "kaviṁ purāṇamanuśāsītāram" etc. (Gī. 8.9). (5) "ūrdhva mūlamadhaḥ śākhāṁ" etc. (Gī. 15.1); (6) "sarvasya cāhaṁ ḥṛdi saṁniviṣṭo etc." (Gī. 15.15); (7) "manmanā bhava madbhakto etc." (Gī. 18.65); and there are various other abbreviated editions of the Gītā based on the same sample.

quantity of wax and thereby reducing as far as possible the surface area of the external envelopes or combs without in any way reducing the cubic contents of the comb in weight of honey, and that thereby the inherent skill and intelligence of the bees can be proved. Therefore, taking into account these uses of such examination, I too have in the appendix at the end of this book, considered some important points arising in the external examination of the Gītā. But those who want to understand the esoteric import of any book, should not waste time in these external examinations. In order to show the difference between those who understand the hidden message of Vākdevī and those who formally worship her, the poet Murārī has given a very excellent illustration. He says:—  
abdhir laṅghita eva vānarabhaṭaiḥ kiṁ tvasya gambhīratām |  
āpātālanimagnapīvaratanur-jānāti manthācalaḥ ||

If one wants to know of the immense depth of the ocean, whom should he ask of it? It is true that on the occasion of the war between Rāma and Rāvaṇa, powerful and agile monkey warriors crossed the ocean without difficulty and reached Ceylon (Lanka); but how could these poor fellows have gained any knowledge of the immense depth of the ocean? The only one who can know truly of this depth is the great Mandarācala (Mandara mountain) rooted in pātāla, which was placed by the gods at the bottom of the ocean, in order to make of it a "manthā" or churner at the time of the churning of the ocean.

According to this logic of the poet Murārī, we must now take into account only the words of those scholars and learned persons who have churned the ocean of the Gītā in order to draw out its moral. The foremost of these writers is the writer of the Mahābhārata. One may even say that he is in a way the author of the present-day Gītā. I will, therefore, in the first place shortly explain what is the moral involved in the Gītā according to the writer of the Mahābhārata.

From the fact that the Gītā is called "Bhagavadgītā" or "the Upaniṣad sung by the Blessed Lord" one sees that the "advice given in the Gītā to Arjuna is principally of the Bhāgavata religion, that is to say, of the religion promulgated by the Bhagavan, because, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is known by the name "Śrī Bhagavān" usually in the Bhāgavata religion. It is stated in the commencement of the fourth chapter of the Gītā (4.1 – 3) that this religion was nothing new, but was something which had been preached by the Bhagavān to Vivasvān and by Vivasvān to Manu and by Mann to Ikṣvāku. And in the exposition of the Nārāyaṇīya or Bhāgavata religion at the end of the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata, after the tradition of the Bhāgavata religion in the various incarnations of Brahmadeva, that is, during the various kalpas has been described, it is stated in the description of the Tretāyuga out of the present life of Brahmadeva, that:—

Tretāyugādaḥ ca tato Vivasvān Manave dadau ।  
Manuś ca lokabhṛtyartham sutāyekṣvākave dadau ।  
Ikṣvākuṇā ca kathito vyāpya lokānavasthitaḥ ॥

(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 348.51 – 52).

i.e., "the Bhāgavata religion has been traditionally handed down by Vivasvān to Manu and by Manu to Ikṣvāku". These two traditions are consistent with each other (see my commentary on Gī. 4.1). And in as much as the traditions of two different religions cannot be the same, one comes to the necessary conclusion, on seeing this unity of traditions, that the Gītā religion and Bhāgavata religion must be one and the same. But this matter does not depend on inference alone. Because, in the exposition of the Nārāyaṇīya or Bhāgavata religion which is to be found in the Mahābhārata itself, Vaiśampāyana

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has described the summary of the Gītā to Janamejaya in the following words:—

evam eṣa mahān dharmah sa te pūrvam ṇṇpottama ।  
kithito Harigītāsu samāsavidhikalpitaḥ ॥

(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 346.10).

that is; "Oh excellent king, Janamejaya! this magnificent Bhāgavata religion together with its ritual was described by me to you concisely on a former occasion namely, in the Harigītā, that is, in the Bhagavadgītā." And in the second foilowing chapter, it is clearly stated that this exposition of the Nārāyaṇīya religion:—

samupoḍheṣvanīkeṣu Kurupāṇḍavayor mṛdhe ।

Arjune vimanaske ca gītā Bhagavatā svayam ॥

(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 348. 8).

that is; "was made by the Blessed Lord when during the fight between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas both the armies had become ready for war and Arjuna had become dejected i.e. 'vimanaska.' " From this it follows beyond doubt that the word "Harigītā" in this place means the Bhagavadgītā and nothing else. Thus, the preceptorial tradition of these two religions is the same. This "Bhāgavata" or "Nārāyaṇīya" religion which has been twice mentioned in the Gītā as being the subject matter of exposition, has the other names of "Sātvata" or "Ekāntika" religion, and where that religion is being expounded in the Mahābhārata, its two-fold quality is described thus:—

Nārāyaṇaparo dharmah punarāvṛttidurlabhah ।

pravṛttilakṣaṇaś caiva dharmo Nārāyaṇātmakah ॥

(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 347.80 – 81)

that is; " this Nārāyaṇīya religion is such as obviates re-birth (punar-janma) i.e., gives complete Release (mokṣa) and is also

Energistic (pravṛttipara)" and then it is clearly explained how this religion is Energistic.

The word "Energism" (pravṛtti) is understood in popular acceptance as meaning, performing desirelessly the duties which pertain to one's status" in life, according to the arrangement of the four castes, without taking up Asceticism (saṁnyāsa). It, therefore, follows that the sermon given in

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the Gītā to Arjuna is of the Bhāgavata religion and, in as much as that religion is Energistic, it also follows that the writer of the Mahābhārata looked upon that advice also as Energistic. Nevertheless, it is not that the Gītā. contains only the Energistic Bhāgavata religion. Vaiśampāyana has further said to Janamejaya:—

yaṭinām cāpi yo dharmah sa te pūrvam nṛpottama ।

kithito Harigītāsu samāsavidhikalpitaḥ ॥

(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 348.53).

that is: "this Bhāgavata religion and side by side with it (cāpi) the renunciatory religion of ascetics (saṁnyāsi) together with the relative ritual has, excellent King, been explained by me to you before in the Bhagavadgītā". Still, although the renunciatory religion has in this way been mentioned in the



Gītā side by side with the energistic religion of Action, yet the tradition of the Gītā religion of Manu, Ikṣvāku etc. which has been mentioned in the Gītā does not at all apply to the renunciatory religion; it is consistent only with the tradition of the Bhāgavata religion. It, therefore, follows from the statements referred to above that according to the writer of the Mahābhārata, the advice which has been given to Arjuna in the Gītā relates principally to the Energistic Bhāgavata religion traditionally handed down from Manu to Ikṣvāku etc., and that it contains a reference to the renunciatory path of ascetics only as a side reference. That this progressive or Energistic Nārāyaṇīya religion in the Mahābhārata and the Bhāgavata religion of the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa are fundamentally one and the same, will be seen to be quite clear from the statements made by Pṛthu, Priyavrata, Prahlāda and other devotees of the Blessed Lord or from the other descriptions of the path of Desireless Action which are to be found elsewhere in the Bhāgavata (Bhāgavata. 4.22.51 – 52; 7.10.23 and 11.4.6). But the true purpose of the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa is not to justify the Energistic principles in favour of Action contained in Bhāgavata religion. This justification is to be found in the Mahābhārata or principally in the Gītā. But, it is stated in the earlier chapters of the Bhāgavata, that while justifying these principles, Śrī Vyāsa forgot to define the moral value of

the devotional aspect of the Bhāgavata religion, and as Desireless Action (naiṣkarmya) by itself is useless without Devotion (Bhāgavata. 1.5.12), the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa had to be subsequently written to make up for this deficit. From this, the real import of the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa becomes quite clear; and on that account, the Energistic aspect of the Bhāgavata religion has not been as forcefully emphasised in the Bhāgavata as the devotional aspect of devotion to the Blessed Lord, which has been explained by the recitation of numerous stories. Nay, the writer of the Bhāgavata says that all yoga of Energism (Karma-Yoga) is useless in the absence of Devotion (Bhāg 1.5.34). Therefore, the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa which lays stress on Devotion is not – although it relates to the Bhāgavata religion – as useful for determining the moral laid down in the Gītā, as the Nārāyaṇīya Upākhyāna of the Bhārata itself which contains the Gītā; and if the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa is made use of for that purpose, then one must do so, bearing clearly in mind, that both the object and the time of the Bhārata and the Bhāgavata are quite different. The various questions as to what were the original forms of the renunciatory religion of monks and of the Energistic Bhāgavata religion, what the reasons were for this difference, in what respects the form of the original Bhāgavata religion has changed in present times etc. will be considered later on in detail.

I have so far dealt with what the moral of the Gītā is according to the writer of the Mahābhārata himself. Let us now see what

the purport of the Gītā is according to those persons who have written commentaries (bhāṣya) and criticisms on the Gītā. Among these commentaries and criticisms, the bhāṣya on the Gītā, of Śrī Śaṁkarācārya is considered to be the most ancient. But there is no doubt that there had been numerous other commentaries or criticisms on the Gītā before that date. These commentaries, however, are not now available and therefore, there are now no means for determining in what way the Gītā was interpreted in the interval between the date of the Mahābhārata and the birth of Śaṁkarācārya. Nevertheless, it is quite clear from the references to the opinions of these earlier critics which are to be found in the Śaṁkarabhāṣya itself (Gī. Śāṁ. Bhā. Introductions to Chap. 1 and 3) that the

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commentators who had come before Śaṁkarācārya had placed, an Energistic interpretation on the Gītā, as combining Action with Spiritual Realisation, that is to say, to the effect that every man who had acquired spiritual knowledge had nevertheless to continue performing the duties pertaining to his particular status in life so long as he lived – as had been done by the writer of the Mahābhārata. But as this doctrine of the Vedic Karma-Yoga was not palatable to Śaṁkarācārya, he has in the commencement of the Bhāṣya, in the introduction, clearly stated that he had written the Bhāṣya with the sole intention, of refuting that opinion and of explaining what the

esoteric moral of the Gītā was according to himself. As a matter of fact, this is exactly what the word "bhāṣya" means. The two words "commentary" (bhāṣya) and "criticism" (tīkā) are, it is true, often used as being synonymous. But ordinarily "tīkā" means explaining the plain meaning of the original work and making the understanding of the words in it easy; but the writer of the "bhāṣya" does not remain satisfied with that; he critically and logically examines the entire work and explains what its purport is according to his opinion and how that work has to be interpreted consistently with that purport. That is the nature of the Śāṃkarabhāṣya on the Gītā. But the different way in which the Ācārya has interpreted the moral of the Gītā requires the previous history to be shortly mentioned before one understands the underlying reason for it. The Vedic religion was not purely ritualistic (tāntrika) and the Upaniṣads had minutely considered even in very ancient times, the deep underlying import of it. But as these Upaniṣads have been written by different ṛṣis at different times, they contain various kinds of thought and some of them are apparently mutually contradictory. Bādarāyaṇācārya has reconciled these inconsistencies and he has in his Brahma-Sūtras harmonised all the Upaniṣads; and on that account, the Vedānta-Sūtras are considered to be as authoritative on this matter as the Upaniṣads themselves. These Vedānta-Sūtras are also known by the other names of "Brahma-Sūtras" or "Śārīraka-Sūtras". Yet the consideration of the philosophy of the Vedic religion

does not end here. Because, as the spiritual knowledge in the Upaniṣads is primarily ascetical, that is

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renunciatory, and as the Vedānta-Sūtras have been written only with the intention of harmonising the Upaniṣads, we find nowhere even in the Upaniṣads any detailed and logical exposition of the Energistic Vedic religion. Therefore, when as stated above, the Energistic Bhagavadgītā for the first time supplemented the philosophy of the Vedic religion it became, as a supplement to the religious philosophy in the Vedas and in the Upaniṣads, a work as authoritative and acceptable as both; and later on, the Upaniṣads, the Vedānta-Sūtras and the Bhagavadgītā acquired the collective name of "Prasthāna-trayī" (the Trinity of Systems). "Prasthāna-trayī" means the three principal authoritative works or pillars of the Vedic religion which systematically and scientifically expounded the two paths of Renunciation (nivṛtti) and Energism (pravṛtti). When once the Bhagavadgītā came in this way to be included in the "Prasthāna-trayī" and the sovereignty of this "Prasthāna-trayī" came to be firmly established, all religious opinions or cults which were inconsistent with these three works or which could not find a place in them, came to be considered as inferior and unacceptable by the followers of the Vedic religion. The net result of this was that the protagonist Ācāryas of each of the various cults which came into existence in India

after the extinction of the Buddhistic religion, such as, the Monistic (advaita), the Qualified-Monistic (viśiṣṭādvaita), the Dualistic (dvaita) and the Purely Monistic (śuddhādvaita) cults with the super- added principles of Devotion (bhakti) or Renunciation (saṁnyāsa) had to write commentaries on all the three parts of the Prasthāna-trayī (and, necessarily on the Bhagavadgītā also), and had somehow or other to prove that according to these three works, which had become authoritative and acceptable as Scriptures long before those cults came into existence, the particular cult promulgated by them was the correct cult, and that the other cults were inconsistent with those Scriptures. Because, if they had admitted that these authoritative religious treatises would support other cults besides those propounded by themselves, the value of their particular cult would to that extent suffer and that was not desirable for any of these protagonists. When once this rule

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of writing sectarian (sāṁpradāyika) commentaries on the Prasthāna-trayī supporting a particular doctrine came into vogue, different learned writers began to propound in their criticisms their own interpretations of the moral of the Gītā on the authority of the commentaries pertaining to their particular doctrine and such criticisms began to gain authority in those particular sects. The commentaries or criticisms which

are now available on the Gītā, are more or less all of this kind, that is to say, they are written by Ācāryas pertaining to diverse sects; and on that account, although the original Bhagavadgītā propounds only one theme, yet it has come to be believed that the same Gītā supports all the various cults. The first, that is the most ancient of these cults is that of Śrī Śaṁkarācārya, and from the point of view of philosophy, that cult has become the one most accepted in India. The first Śaṁkarācārya was born in the year 710 of the Śālivāhana era (788 A. D.) and in the 32nd year of his age, he entered the caves (Śaka. 710 to 742.) i.e. 788 – 820 A.D. [1] The Ācārya was a superman and a great sage and he had by his brilliant intellectual power refuted the Jain and the Buddhistic doctrines which had then gained ground on all sides and established his own Non-Dualistic (advaita) doctrine; and, as is well-known, he established four monasteries (maṭha) in the four directions of India for the protection of the Vedic religion contained in the Śruti and Smṛti and for the second time in the Kali-Yuga gave currency to the Vedic renunciatory doctrine or cult of Asceticism (saṁnyāsa). Whatever religious doctrine is taken, it naturally falls into two divisions; one is the philosophical aspect of it and the other, the actual mode of life prescribed by it. In the first part, the meaning of Release (mokṣa) is usually explained in a scientific and logical way after explaining what conclusions

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[1] In my opinion, the date of the first Śaṁkarācārya must be pushed back by at least 100 years, and I have given my reasons for doing so in the Appendix.

must be drawn as to the nature of the Parameśvara after a proper consideration of the material body (piṇḍa) in its relation to the Cosmos (brahmāṇḍa); in the other part, there is an explanation of how a man has to lead his life in this world, so that such mode of life should become a means for obtaining

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that Release (mokṣa). According to the first of these, that is to say, according to the philosophical aspects of the doctrine, Śaṅkarācārya says that (1) the multiplicity of the various objects in the world, such as, "I", "You", or all the other things which are visible to the eye, is not a true multiplicity, but that there is in all of them a single, pure, and eternal Highest Self (Parabrahman), and various human organs experience a sense of multiplicity as a result of the Illusion (māyā) of that Parabrahman; (2) the Self (Ātman) of a man is also fundamentally of the same nature as the Parabrahman; and (3) that it is not possible for anyone to obtain Release (mokṣa) except after the complete Realisation (jñāna) or personal experience of this identity of the Ātman and the Parabrahman. This is known as Non-Dualism (advaita-vāda), because, the sum and substance of this doctrine is, that there is no other independent and real substance except one pure self-enlightened, eternal, and Released Parabrahman; that the multiplicity which is visible to the eyes is an optical illusion or an imaginary experience resulting from the effect of Illusion



(māyā); and that Māyā is not some distinct, real, or independent substance, but is unreal (mithyā); and, when one has to consider only the philosophical aspect of the doctrine, it is not necessary to go deeper into this opinion of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. But that does not end there. Coupled with the Non-Dualistic philosophy there is another proposition of the Śaṅkara doctrine relating to the mode of life, that, although it is necessary to perform the Actions pertaining to the state of a householder in order to acquire the capacity of realising the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman by the purification of the mind, yet it will be impossible to obtain Release unless one discontinues those actions later on and ultimately gives them up and takes up saṁnyāsa (asceticism); because, in as much as Action (karma) and Knowledge (jñāna) are mutually antagonistic like light and darkness, the knowledge of the Brahman does not become perfect unless a man has entirely conquered all root tendencies (vāsanā) and given up all Actions. This second proposition is known as the Path of Renunciation (nivṛtti-mārga), or because in this path one ultimately gives up all Actions and remains steeped in Knowledge or Realisation, it is also called

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"saṁnyāsa-niṣṭha" (the Path of Renunciation) or "jñāna-niṣṭha" (the Path of Realisation). It is stated in the Śaṅkarabhāṣya on the Upaniṣads and on the Brahmasūtras

that not only the Non-Dualistic philosophy but also the Path of Renunciation that is to say, both the aspects of the cult of Śaṁkara have been preached in those books; and in the Bhāṣya on the Gītā, definite conclusion has been drawn that the teaching of the Bhagavadgītā is the same (Gī. Śāṁ. Bhā. Introduction; and Brahmā-Sū. Śāṁ. Bhā. 2.1.14); and as authority for that he has quoted such sentences from the Gītā as "jñānagniḥ sarva karmāṇi bhasmasāt kurute" i.e., "all Action (karma) is reduced to ashes in the fire of jñāna" (Gī. 4.37) and "sarva karmākhilam Pārtha jñāne parisamāpyate" all Actions culminate in Realisation (jñāna)" (Gī. 4.33). In short, the Śaṁkarabhāṣya has been written in order to show that the teaching of the Gītā is consistent with that particular Vedic path which – after proving it to be the most excellent one – was recommended by Śaṁkarācārya, after he had refuted the Buddhistic doctrines and further, to show that the Gītā is not in favour of the combination of Knowledge with Action, which was prescribed by the previous commentators: and to show that the Blessed Lord has in the Gītā preached to Arjuna the doctrine of the Śaṁkara cult, that Action is only a means of acquiring Knowledge and is inferior and that Release is ultimately obtained only by Knowledge combined with Renunciation of Action. If there had been any commentary on the Gītā before the date of Śaṁkarācārya. interpreting it as favouring Asceticism, such a commentary is not now available. Therefore, we must deny that the first attempt to deprive the Gītā of its Energistic form and to give it a Renunciatory

doctrinal form was made by the Śāṃkarabhāṣya. Those commentators on the Gītā who came after Śrī Śāṃkarācārya and who followed his doctrines, such as, Madhusūdana and others, have in this matter principally adopted the procedure of the Ācārya. Yet, later on, there came into existence another queer idea, namely that the principal sacred canon enunciated in the Chāndogyopaniṣad, namely, "TAT TVAM ASI " i.e., "THAT (Parabrahman) ART THOU (Śvetaketu) ", which is one of the sacred canons of the Non-Dualistic cult, is the canon which has

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been expatiated upon in the eighteen chapters of the Gītā, but that the Blessed Lord has changed the order of the three parts of that sacred canon and taken "tvam" first and "tat" after that and "asi" last, and He has in this new order impartially allotted six chapters of the Gītā to each of these parts equally! The Paiśāca-bhāṣya on the Gītā does not pertain to any particular doctrine but is independent and it is believed to have been written by Hanumān i.e., by Māruti. But such is not the case. This Bhāṣya has been written by the philosopher Hanumān, who has also written a criticism on the Bhāgavata and it supports the path of Renunciation and in it, in some places, interpretations have been copied verbatim from the Śāṃkarabhāṣya. In the same way, the older or modern Marathi translations of or commentaries on the Gītā principally follow the Śāṃkarabhāṣya; and the English

translation of the Bhagavadgītā by the late Kashinath Trimbak Telang, published in the Sacred Books of East Series brought out by Professor Max Müller, is stated by him at the end at the introduction to that translation, to be as far as possible consistent with Śrī Śaṅkarācārya and the commentators of his school.

When once in this way, doctrinal commentaries on the Gītā and on the other two works out of the Prasthāna-trayī began to be written, the same course was later on followed by persons holding other doctrinal views. About 250 years after the coming to existence of the Śāṅkara tradition which maintained the theory of Illusion (māyā). Non-Dualism (advaita) and Renunciation (saṁnyāsa), Śrī Rāmānujācārya (born Saka 938 i.e., 1016 A. D.) founded the Qualified-Monism (viśiṣṭādvaita) tradition; and in order to substantiate that cult he also, like Śrī Śaṅkarācārya has written independent commentaries (bhāṣya) on the Prasthāna-trayī including, of course, the Gītā. This school is of the opinion that the doctrines of the Unreality of Illusion (māyā) and Non-Dualism laid down by Śaṅkarācārya were not correct and that although the three principles of Consciousness (jīva), Cosmos (jagat) and Īśvara were independent, yet in as much as jīva, i.e., consciousness (cit), and the Cosmos (which is acit i.e., unconscious) were both the body of one and the same Īśvara, therefore, the cit-acit-bodied Īśvara was one and one alone and that out of this subtle 'cit' and 'acit' in the

body of the Īśvara, the gross cit and the gross acit or the numerous forms of Life and the Cosmos came into existence later on; and Rāmānujācārya says that from the philosophical point of view, this is the doctrine which has been enunciated by the Upaniṣads and the Brahma-Sūtras (Gī. Rāmā. 2.12; 13.2). One may even say that the works of Rāmānujācārya were responsible for the Qualified-Monism doctrine finding its way into the Bhāgavata religion; because, the previous exposition of the Bhāgavata religion to be found in the Mahābhārata and in the Gītā is seen to be on the basis of the Non-Dualistic cult. As Rāmānujācārya belonged to the Bhāgavata religion, he ought to have naturally realised that the Gītā enunciated the Energistic path of Karma-Yoga. But as at the date of Rāmānujācārya, the Karma-Yoga of the original Bhāgavata religion had practically come to an end and it had acquired a Qualified-Monistic (viśiṣṭādvaita) form in its philosophical aspect, and principally a Devotional form from the point of view of the mode of life, Rāmānujācārya drew the further conclusions that although jñāna, karma and bhakti (Devotion) are all three referred to in the Gītā, yet the doctrine enunciated in the Gītā is in essence Qualified-Monistic from the point of view of philosophy, and of Devotion to the Vāsudeva from the point of view of mode of life; and that the Path of Action (karma-niṣṭhā) was something which led to Path

of knowledge ( jñāna-niṣṭhā) and was not something independent (Gī. Rā. Bhā. 16.1 and 3.1). But although Rāmānujācārya had effected a change in the cult of Śāṃkara by substituting the Qualified-Monism for Non-Duality and Devotion for Renunciation, yet if Devotion is looked upon as the highest duty of man from the point of view of mode of life, then the lifelong performance of the worldly duties pertaining to one's particular status, becomes an inferior mode of life; and on that account the interpretation put on the Gītā by Rāmānujācārya must also be looked upon as in a way in favour of Renunciation of Action. Because, when once the mind has become purified as a result of an Energistic mode of life, and man has attained Realisation (jñāna), whether he, thereafter, adopts the fourth stage of life and remains steeped in the contemplation of the Brahman or he is steeped in the

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unbounded loving worship of the Vāsudeva is just the same from the point of view of Action (karma); that is to say, both are Renunciatory. And the same objection applies to the other cults which came into existence after the date of Rāmānujācārya. Although Rāmānujācārya may have been right in saying that the theory of the Non-Reality of Illusion is wrong and that one ultimately attains Release only by devotion to the Vāsudeva, yet looking upon the Parabrahman and the Conscious Ego (jīva) as ONE in one way, and different in other

ways is a contradiction in terms and an, inconsistency. Therefore, a third school which came into existence after the date of Śrī Rāmānujācārya, is of the opinion, that both must be looked upon as eternally different from each other and that there never can be any unity between them, whether partial or total, and therefore, this school is known as the Dualist school. The protagonist of this school was Śrī Madhvācārya, alias Srīmadānandatīrtha. He died in Śaka 1120 (1198 A.D.) and according to the Madhva school, he was then 79 years old. But Dr. Bhandarkar has in the English Book "Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism, and other sects" recently published by him, established on the authority of stone inscriptions and other books (see page 59) that Madhvācārya must be taken to have lived from Śaka 1119 to 1198 (1197 to 1276 A. D.). Madhvācārya has shown in his commentaries on the Prasthāna-trayī (which includes the Gītā) that all these sacred books are in favour of the theory of Duality. In his commentary on the Gītā, he says that although Desireless Action has been extolled in the Gītā, yet Desireless Action is only a means and Devotion is the true and ultimate cult, and that when once one has become perfect by following the Path of Devotion, whether one thereafter performs or does not perform Action is just the same. It is true that there are some statements in the Gītā such as, "dhyānāt karmaphalatyaṅgaḥ" i.e., the abandonment of the fruit of the action (i.e. Desireless Action) is superior to the meditation on the Parameśvara (i.e., Devotion) " etc. which are inconsistent with this doctrine; but, says the Mādhvabhāṣya on the Gītā,

such sentences are not to be understood literally but as mere expletives and unimportant (Gī. Mā. Bhā. 12.30). The fourth school is the

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school of Śrī Vallabhācārya (born in Śaka 1401 i.e., 1479 A. D.) This is also a Vaiṣṇava School like those of Rāmānuja and Madhvācārya. However, the opinions of this school Regarding the Conscious Ego (jīva) A Cosmos (jagat), and Īśvara are different from the opinions of the Qualified-Monism or the Dualistic Schools. This school accepts the doctrine that the Conscious Ego (jīva) when pure and unblinded by Illusion (māyā) and the Parabrahman are one, and are not two distinct things; and that is why, this school is known as the pure Non-Dualistic (śuddhādvaita), school. Nevertheless this School differs from the Śāṅkara school on account of the other doctrines pertaining to it, namely that, the Conscious Ego (jīva) and the Brahman cannot be looked upon as one and the same in the same sense as done by Śrī Śāṅkarācārya but that the various Souls are particles of the Īśvara, like sparks of fire; that the Cosmos, which is composed of Illusion, is not unreal (mithyā) but Illusion is a Force which has separated itself from the Īśvara at the desire of the Parameśvara, that the Conscious Ego (jīva) which has become dependent on Illusion, cannot acquire the knowledge necessary for obtaining Release except by divine pleasure; and that, therefore, Devotion to the



Blessed Lord is the most important means of obtaining Release. This pleasure of the Parameśvara is also known by the other names of 'puṣṭi', 'poṣaṇa' etc. and, therefore, this cult is also known as 'puṣṭi-mārga'. In the books of this school on the Gītā, such as the Tattvadīpikā And others, it is laid down that in as much as the Blessed Lord has, after first preaching to Arjuna the Sāṃkhya philosophy and the Karma-Yoga, ultimately made him perfect by treating him with the nectar of the philosophy of Devotion, Devotion but above all, the Devotion included in 'puṣṭi-mārga' – which entails the abandonment of home and domestic ties – is the most concentrated moral of the Gītā and that on that account the Blessed Lord has in the end given the advice:– "sarvadharmān parityajya māmekaṃ śaraṇaṃ vraja" – i.e., "give up all other religions and surrender yourself to Me alone" (Gī. 18.66). Besides these, there is another Vaiṣṇava cult, entailing the worship of Rādhākṛṣṇa, which was promulgated by Nimbārka. Dr. Bhandarkar has established that this Ācārya

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lived after the date of Rāmānujācārya and before the date of Madhvācārya; that is to say about Saka. 1084 (1162 A. D.) he opinion of Nimbārkācārya regarding the Conscious Ego (jīva), the Cosmos (jagat) and the Īśvara is, that although these three are different from each other, yet the existence and activity of the Conscious Ego (jīva) and of the Cosmos are not

independent but depend upon the desire of the Īśvara; and that the subtle elements of the Conscious Ego (jīva) and of the Cosmos are contained in the fundamental Īśvara. In order to prove this doctrine Nimbārka has written an independent bhāṣya on the Vedānta-sūtras, and Keśava Kaśmīri Bhattācārya, who belongs to this school has written a commentary on the Bhagavadgītā called 'Tattvaparakāśikā' and has shown in it that the moral laid down by the Gītā is consistent with the doctrines of this school. In order to differentiate this school from the Qualified-Monism school of Rāmānujācārya, one may refer to it as the Dual-Non-Dual (dvaitādvaita) school. It is quite clear that these different Devotional sub-cults of Duality and Qualified-Monism which discard the Śaṅkara doctrine of Māyā have come into existence because of the belief that Devotion, that is, the worship of a tangible thing, loses foundation and to a certain extent becomes forceless, unless one looks upon the visible objects in the world as real. But one cannot say that in order to justify Devotion, the theories of Non-duality or of Illusion have to be discarded. The saints in the Mahārāṣṭra have substantiated the doctrine of Devotion without discarding the doctrines of Illusion and Non-Duality; and this course seems to have been followed from before the time of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. In this cult, the doctrines of Non-Duality, the illusory nature of things, and the necessity of abandonment of Action which are the concomitant doctrines of the Śaṅkara cult are taken for granted. But the advice of the followers of this school, such as

the Saint Tukaram, is that Devotion is the easiest of the means by which Release in the shape of realising the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, can be obtained:— "if you want to reach the Īśvara, then this is the easiest way" (Tukā. Gā. 3002.2); and they say that the path of Devotion based on Non-Duality is the principal moral of the Gītā in as much as the Blessed Lord himself has first told Arjuna that "kleśodhi-

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katarasteṣām avyaktāsaktacetasām" (Gī. 12.5), i.e., "concentrating the mind on the Intangible Brahman is more difficult" and subsequently told him that: "bhaktāstetīva me priyāḥ" i.e., "my devotees are most beloved of me" (Gī. 12.20). The summing up of the Gītā. which has been made by Sridhar Svāmī in his commentary on the Gītā. (Gī. 18.78) is of this kind. But, the most valuable work relating to this school, though in the Marathi language, is the Jñāneśvarī. In this work it is stated that the Doctrine of Karma is dealt with in the first four out of the 18 chapters of the Gītā, the Doctrine of Devotion in the next seven and the Doctrine of Jñāna in the subsequent chapters and Jñāneśvara himself has at the end of his book said that he has written his commentary "after consulting the Bhāṣyakāras (Śaṁkarācārya)." But, as Jñāneśvara Maharaja had the wonderful skill of expounding the meaning of the Gītā, by numerous beautiful illustrations and comparisons and also, as he has propounded the doctrines of Desireless Action and

principally the doctrine of Devotion in a much better way than Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, the Jñāneśvarī must be looked upon as an independent treatise on the Gītā. Jñāneśvara Maharaja himself was a yogī. Therefore, he has written a very detailed commentary on that verse in the sixth chapter of the Gītā which deals with the practice of the Pātañjala Yoga, and in it he has said that the words of the Blessed Lord at the end of the chapter namely: "tasmādyoyī bhavāṛjuna" ...i.e., "therefore, Oh Arjuna, become a Yogī, that is, become proficient in the practice of the Yoga" show that the Blessed Lord has declared the Pātañjala Yoga to be the 'pantharāja' i.e., the most excellent of all paths. In short, different commentators have interpreted the Gītā in their own ways by first declaring the Energistic path of Action (Karma-Yoga) preached by the Gītā to be inferior, that is to say, merely a means for Realisation (jñāna), and then going on to say that the Gītā has preached the various philosophical doctrines, as also the highest duties from the point of view of Release, which are prescribed, by their respective schools, such as:— Non-Dualism based on the doctrine of Illusion, coupled with Renunciation of Action; or Qualified-Monism based on the reality of Illusion, coupled with Devotion to the Vāsudeva; or

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Dualism, coupled with worship of the Viṣṇu; or pure Non-dualism, coupled with Devotion; or the Non-Dualism of the

Śaṅkara cult, coupled with Devotion; or Pātañjala yoga, coupled with Devotion; or Devotion pure and simple; or Yoga pure and simple; or Realisation of the Brahman pure and simple, [1] – all of which are paths of Release, based on Renunciation. No one says that the Bhagavadgītā looks upon the Karma-Yoga as the most excellent path of life. It is not that I alone say so. Even the well-known Marathi poet Vāman Pandit is of the same opinion. In his exhaustive commentary on the Gītā, in the Marathi language known as Yathārtha-Dīpikā, he first says:– "But Oh, Blessed Lord, in this Kali-yuga each one interpretes the Gītā according to his own opinion", and he goes on to say:– "Everyone on some pretext or other gives a different meaning to the Gītā but I do not like this their doing, though they are great; what shall I do, Oh, Blessed Lord?" This is his complaint to the Blessed Lord. Seeing this confusion of the diverse opinions of the commentators, some scholars say that in as much as these various traditional doctrines of Release are mutually contradictory and one cannot definitely say that any particular one of them has been recommended by the Gītā, one has to come to the conclusion that the Blessed Lord has on the battle-field at the commencement of the war described individually, precisely, and skilfully all those various means of attaining Release – and

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[1] The several commentaries on the Gītā by the Ācāryas of the various cults and the important criticisms pertaining to those cults in all fifteen, have been recently published at the Guzrathi Printing Press. This book is very useful for studying the opinions advanced by the various commentators side by side.

specially, the three paths of Action (karma), Devotion (bhakti), and Realisation (jñāna) and satisfied Arjuna in whose mind there had arisen a confusion about these diverse means of attaining Release. It is true that some commentators do maintain that these descriptions of the various means of Release are not several or unconnected with each other, but the Gītā has harmonised them with each other; and finally, there are also to be found others who say that although the teaching of the Brahman in the Gītā is apparently easy, yet the true import of it is very deep and no one can

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understand it except from the mouth of a preceptor (Gī. 4.34.), and that though there may be numerous criticisms on the Gītā, yet, there is no other way to realise the true meaning of it, except from the mouth of a preceptor.

These numerous interpretations of the Bhagavadgītā, namely, the Energistic interpretation consistent with the Bhāgavata religion made by the writer of the Mahābhārata and the other purely Renunciatory ones made by several later Ācāryas, poets, yogis, or devotees of the Blessed Lord, consistently with the different traditionary schools to which they respectively belonged, are likely to cause confusion and one will naturally ask whether it is possible that all these mutually contradictory

interpretations can be put on one and the same work; and if it is not only possible but even desirable, then why so? No one can entertain any doubt that these various Ācāryas who wrote the commentaries were learned, religious and extremely pure-minded. Nay, one may even say that the world has not to this day produced a philosopher of the calibre of Śrī.

Śaṅkarācārya. Then why should there have been such a difference between him and the later Ācāryas? The Gītā is not such a pot of jugglery, that any one can extract any meaning he likes out of it. The Gītā had been written long before these various schools of thought came into existence, and it was preached by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna not to increase his confusion but to remove it; and it contains a preaching of one definite creed to Arjuna (Gī. 5.1, 2), and the effect of that advice on Arjuna has also been what it ought to have been. Then, why should there be so much confusion about the teaching of the Gītā? This question seems a really difficult one. But the answer of it is not as difficult as would appear, at first sight. Suppose, looking at a sweet and nice food-preparation, one says that it is made of wheat, and another one says it is made of ghee and a third one says, it is made of sugar, according to his own taste; then, which one of them will you call wrong? Each one is correct in his own way and ultimately the question what that food-preparation is, remains unsolved. Because, as it is possible to mix wheat, clarified butter, and sugar and to prepare from them various kinds of eatables such as 'ladūs', 'jilebi', 'ghīwar' etc. the particular eatable

cannot be sufficiently defined by saying that ghee or wheat or sugar is the principle element in it. Just as when the ocean was churned, though one person got nectar, another one got poison, and others got Lakṣmī, Airāvata, Kaustubha, Pārijāta, and other articles, yet the real nature of the ocean was not thereby fixed, so also is the case of the commentators who have churned the ocean of the Gītā on a doctrinal basis, or one may even say that just as, the same Śrī, Kṛṣṇa Bhagavāna who had entered the Durbar at the time of the assassination of Kāṁsa, appeared to various persons in different forms, that is, he appeared to athletes like adamant and to women like the God of Beauty (Madana) and to parents like their own son etc. (Bhāg. 10. Pū. 43.17), so also although the Bhagavadgītā is one and the same, people following different cults see it in a different light. Whatever religious cult may be taken, it is quite clear that ordinarily it must be based on some authoritative religious text or other; otherwise that cult will be considered to be totally without authority and will not be acceptable to people. Therefore, however numerous the different cults of the Vedic religion may be, yet with the exception of a few specified things, such as, the Īśvara, the Conscious Ego and the Cosmos and their mutual interrelations, all other things are common to all the various cults; and therefore, in the various doctrinal commentaries or criticisms which have been written



on our authoritative religious texts, ninety per cent of the statements or stanzas in the original work are interpreted in more or less the same way. The only difference is as regards the remaining statements or doctrines. If these statements are taken in their, literal meaning, they cannot possibly be equally appropriate to all the cults. Therefore, different commentators, who have propounded different doctrines, usually accept as important only such of these statements as are consistent with their own particular cult, and either say that the others are unimportant, or skilfully twist the meanings of such statements as might be totally inconsistent with their cults, or wherever possible, they draw hidden meanings or inferences favourable to themselves from easy and plain statements, and say that the particular work is an authority for their particular cult. For instance, see my commentary on Gītā 2.12 and 16; 3.19; 6.3

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and 18.2. But it will be easily seen that laying down in this way that a book has a particular purport, and examining in the first place, without prejudice, the whole of the work, and drawing its implied purport without insisting that one's own cult is propounded by the Gītā, or on any such other thing, are two totally different things.

If one gives up the doctrinal method of determining the purport of a book as faulty, one must show what other means there are for determining the import of the Gītā. There is an old and more or less generally accepted rule on this matter in the form of a verse of the Mīmāṃsā writers, who were extremely skilful in determining the meanings of a particular book, chapter, or sentence. That verse is as follows:

upakramopasaṁhārau abhyāso 'pūrvatā phalam |  
arthavāadopapattī ca liṅgaṁ tātpariyanirṇaye ||

The Mīmāṃsā writers say that if one has to find out the purport of any particular writing, chapter, or book, then the seven things mentioned in the above verse are necessary (i.e., liṅga). and all these seven things have got to be considered. The first two out of these are 'upakramopasaṁhārau', which mean the beginning and the end of the book. Every writer starts writing a book with some motive or other in his mind; and when that particular object has been achieved, he completes his book. Therefore, the commencement and the end of the work have first to be taken into account in determining the purport of the book. Geometry has defined a straight line as a line which goes from the point of commencement straight to the last point without swerving above or below or to the right or to the left. The same rule applies to the purport of a book. That purport which is properly fixed between the beginning and the end of the book and does not leave or divert from either of them, is the proper

purport of it. If there are other roads for going from the beginning to the end, all those roads must be considered as crooked roads or bye-paths. When the direction of the purport of a work has in this way been fixed with due consideration for the commencement and the end, one should see what things are told repeatedly in it, that is to say, of what things an 'abhyāsa' has been made. Because, whatever thing is intended by the writer of a book to be proved, he shows

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numerous reasons in support of it on numerous occasions and refers to it as a definite proposition over and over again, saying each time:— "therefore, this thing is proved", or, "therefore, this particular thing has got to be done", The fourth and the fifth means for determining the purport of the work are the new-ness (apūrvatā) and the effect (phala) of it. 'Apūrvatā' means something new. Unless the writer has something new to tell, he is usually not induced to write a new book; at any rate, that used to be so when there were no printing presses. Therefore, before determining the purport of a book one has in the first instance to see what it contains which is new, particular, or not previously known. In the same way. if some particular result has been achieved by that writing or by that book, that is to say, if it has had some definite effect, then one must also take into account that result or effect. Because, in as much as the book has been written with the express intention

that that particular result or effect should be achieved, the object of the writer becomes clearer from the effect which has been achieved. The sixth and the seventh means are 'arthavāda' and 'upapatti'. 'Arthavāda' is a technical term of the vyavasāyātmikā school (Jai. Sū. 1.2.1 – 18). Although the thing about which a statement is to be made or the fact which is to be proved is fixed, the writer nevertheless, deals with many other things as occasion arises, whether by way of illustration or by way of comparison in the course of the argument, and whether for showing consistency or for showing the similarity or the difference, or in order to support his own side by showing the faults of the opposite side, or for the sake of grace or as an exaggeration, or by way of stating the previous history of the question, or for some other reason, with the idea of supplementing the argument, and sometimes without any reason whatsoever. The statements, which are made by the writer on such occasions, are given by way of glorification merely or of further elucidation or are only supplemental, though they might not be totally irrelevant to the subject-matter to be proved; and therefore, it is not certain that such statements are always true. [1]

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[1] If the statements made in the arthavāda are consistent with the actual state of things, it is called 'anuvāda,' if inconsistent it is called 'guṇavāda', and if it is neither, it is called 'bhutārthavāda'. 'Arthavāda' is a common word and these are the three sub-divisions of arthavāda according to the truth or false-hood of the statements made in it.

One may even say that the writer is not particularly careful to see whether or not the statements made in the arthavāda, are literally true; and therefore, one is not justified in looking upon the statements made in an arthavāda, as authoritative, that is to say, as indicating the conclusions arrived at by the writer with reference to the various subject-matters in it. Looking upon them as pure glorifications, that is to say, as hollow, irrelevant, or mere praise, the Mīmāṃsā writers call them 'arthavāda', and they do not take into account these statements in determining the final conclusion to be drawn from the work. Even after all this, one has still to see ultimately the upapatti. 'Upapatti' or 'upapādana' is the name given to the refuting of all things which would prove the contrary case and the subsequent logical and systematic marshalling of things, which support one's own case when you are proving a particular point. When the two ends being the upakrama and the upasamhāra, have once been fixed, the intervening line can be defined by the consideration of the arthavāda and the upapatti. As the arthavāda shows you what subject matter is irrelevant or merely auxiliary, the man who attempts to determine the conclusion of the book, does not touch the several bye-paths when once the arthavāda has been determined; and when once all the bye- paths have been abandoned and the reader or the critic takes to the correct path, the ladder of upapatti like the wave of the sea pushes

him forward from stage to stage further and further from the beginning until at last he reaches the conclusion. As these rules of determining the purport of a book laid down by our ancient vyavasāyātmikā writers are equally accepted by learned persons in all countries, it is not necessary to further labour their usefulness or necessity. [1]

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Here someone may ask:— Did not the various Ācāryas, who founded the various cults, know these rules of Mīmāṃsā? And, if one finds these rules in their own works, then what reason is there for saying that the purport of the Gītā drawn by the Mīmāṃsā school is one-sided? To that, the only answer is, that once a man's vision has become doctrinal, he naturally adopts that method by which he can prove that the cult which he follows is the cult established by authoritative religious treatises. Because, doctrinal commentators start with this fixed pre-conceived notion regarding the purport of a book,

- [1] These rules of determining the import of a book are seen to be observed even in English Courts of justice. For instance, if it is not possible to understand any particular judgment, such, meaning is decided by considering the result (phala) of that judgment, namely, the Decree or order passed on it; and if the judgment contains any statements which are not necessary for determining the point at issue, these statements are not taken as authorities for the purpose of later cases. Such statements are known as "obiter dicta" or "useless statements", and strictly speaking this is one kind of "arthavāda".

that if it yields some purport, inconsistent with their own doctrine, that purport is wrong, and that some other meaning is intended; and though some rule of the vyavasāyātmikā logic is violated when they attempt to prove that the meaning, which in their opinion is the proved correct meaning has been accepted everywhere, these commentators, as a result of this fixed pre-conviction are not in the least perturbed thereby. The works Mitākṣarā and Dāyabhāga etc. which deal with the Hindu Law, attempt to harmonise the Smṛti texts on this principle. But the books of Hindu Law are not unique in this respect. Even, the numerous sectarian writers belonging to the numerous subsequent sects, of Christian and Mahomedan religions, twist in the same way the original works on those religions namely the Bible and Quran, and it is on the same principle that the followers of Christ have ascribed meanings to some of the sentences in the Old Testament of the Bible, which are different from those given to them by the Jews. Nay, wherever the number of the authoritative treatises or writings on any subject is fixed in advance and one has to subsequently justify one's own position on the basis of these limited authoritative books, the same method of determining the meaning of any book is seen to be followed. This also accounts for the way in which present-day legislators, pleaders or judges, very often twist

one way or the other, former authoritative or legal treatises. If such be the case with purely worldly matters, what wonder is there that divergent commentaries based on different traditions have been written on the Upaniṣads and the Vedānta-Sūtras and side by side with them, on the third book out of the Prasthānatrayī, namely, the Bhagavadgītā? But if one leaves aside this doctrinal method, and pays a little attention to the upakrama, upasamhāra etc., of the Bhagavadgītā, it will be seen that the Blessed Lord preached the Gītā to Arjuna at the critical moment before the Bhārata war was actually started, when the armies of both sides had formed themselves into ranks on the Kurukṣetra and were on the point of opening the fight, and that He has done so with the idea of inducing Arjuna, – who had become dejected and was on the point of renouncing the world, – to perform his duties as a warrior by preaching to him the gospel of the Brahman. When Arjuna began to see who had come to fight with him taking the part of the unjust Duryodhana, he saw the old ancestor Bhīṣma, the preceptor Droṇācārya, the preceptor's son Aśvatthāman, the Kauravas (who though antagonistic were yet his cousins), and his next-of-kin, relations, friends, maternal uncles, paternal uncles, brothers-in-law, kings, princes, etc.; and realising that in order to win the kingdom of Hastināpura, he would have to kill these people and thereby incur the greatest of sins like the destruction of one's own clan, his mind suddenly became dejected. On the one hand, the religion of the warrior was



saying to him:– "Fight!", and on the "other hand, devotion to his ancestors, devotion to his preceptors, love for his brethren, affection for his relatives, and other natural laws were pulling him backwards. If he fought, it would be a fight with his own people, and thereby he would incur the terrible sin of killing his ancestors, preceptors, relatives etc.; and if he did not fight, he would be failing in his duty as a warrior; and when in this way he was between the frying-pan and the fire, he was in the same position as a person caught between two fighting rams! He was indeed a great warrior, but when he was suddenly caught in the moral net of righteousness and unrighteousness, he felt faint, his hair rose on end, the bow in his hand fell down and he suddenly flopped

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down in his chariot, crying: "I shall not fight!", and ultimately the distant feeling of his duty as a warrior was overcome by the naturally more proximate feeling of love for his brethren and he in self-deception began to think to himself:– "It would be better to beg in order to fill the pit of the stomach, rather than that I should win the kingdom by committing such terrible sins as killing ancestors or preceptors or brethren or relatives or ex-terminating even the whole clan. It does not matter one whit if my enemies, seeing me unarmed at this moment, come and cut my throat, but I do not wish to enjoy that happiness which is steeped in the blood of my own relatives killed in

warfare, and burdened with their curses. It is true the warrior-religion is there, but if on that account I have to incur such terrible sins as killing my own ancestors, brethren, or preceptors, then, may that warrior-religion and warrior-morality go to perdition. If the other side, not realising this, have become cruel in heart, I ought not do the same thing; I must see in what consists the true salvation of my Self, and if my conscience does not consider it proper to commit such terrible sins, then, however sacred the warrior-religion may be, of what use is it to me in these circumstances?" When in this way his conscience began to prick him and he became uncertain as to his duty (dharma-saṁmūḍha) and did not know which path of duty to follow, he surrendered himself to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who preached the Gītā, to him and put him on the right path; and when Arjuna, wanted to back out of the fight, fearing that it would entail the death of Bhīṣma and others—though it was his duty to fight — Śrī Kṛṣṇa made him take up the fight of his own accord. If we have to extract the true purport of the teaching of the Gītā, such purport must be consistent with this 'upakrama' (beginning) and 'upasaṁhāra' (conclusion). It would have been out of place here for Śrī Kṛṣṇa to explain how Release could be obtained by Devotion or by the Knowledge of the Brahman or by the Pātañjala-yoga, which were purely renunciatory paths or paths entailing asceticism and abandonment of Action. Śrī Kṛṣṇa did not intend to send Arjuna to the woods as a mendicant by making a saṁnyāsin of

him, filling his mind with apathy (vairāgya), nor to induce him to go to the Himalayas as a yogin wearing a loin cloth (kaupīna)

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and eating the leaves of the nim-tree. Nor did the Blessed Lord intend to place in his hands cymbals and a drum and a harp instead of bow and arrow? and to make him dance again like Bṛhannalā before the entire warrior community of India, on the sacred field of the Kuru, steeped in the beatific happiness of loudly reciting the name of the Blessed Lord with supreme devotion, to the tune of those musical instruments. The dance which Arjuna had to make on the battle-field of Kuru, after having finished his period of remaining incongnito (ajñāta-vāsa) was of quite a different nature. When the Blessed Lord was preaching the Gītā, He has in numerous places, and showing reasons at every step and using the conjunction 'tasmāt' i.e., 'for this reason' – which is an important conjunction showing the reason – said:– "tasmād yudhyasva Bhārata" – i.e., "there- fore, Arjuna, fight" (Gī. 2.18), or "tasmād uttiṣṭha Kaunteya yuddhāya kṛtaniścayaḥ" – i.e., "therefore, determine to fight and rise (Gī. 2.37), or "tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samācara" – i.e., "therefore, give up attachment, and do your duty" (Gī. 3.19), or, "kuru karmaiva tasmāt tvaṁ" – i.e. "therefore, perform Action" (Gī. 4.15), or "tasmāt... .. mām anusmara yudhya ca" – i.e., "therefore, think of me and fight" (Gī. 8.7); "the doer and the

causer of everything is I myself, and you are only the tool; and therefore, fight and conquer your enemies" (Gī. 11.3); "it is proper that you should perform all Actions, which are your duties according to the Śāstras" (Gī. 16.24) – all which is a preaching definitely Energistic; and in the eighteenth chapter of the upasamhāra (conclusion), He says again:– "you must do all these duties" (Gī. 18.6), as His definite and best advice; and ultimately asking Arjuna the question:– "Oh, Arjuna, has your self- deception, duo to ignorance, yet been removed or not? " (Gī. 18.72), He has taken an acknowledgment from him in the following words:–

naṣṭo mohaḥ smṛtir labdhā tvatprasādān mayācyuta ।  
sthito 'smi gatasamdehaḥ kariṣye vacanaṁ tava ॥

i.e., " my doubts and my ignorance about my duties, have now been removed; I shall now do as You say". And it is not that this acknowledgment was merely orally given by Arjuna, but thereafter, he did really fight and in the course of the fight

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arising on that occasion, he has actually killed Bhīṣma, Karṇa, Jayadratha, and others as occasion arose. The objection taken to this by some is that:– the advice given by the Blessed Lord preached Realisation (jñāna) based on Renunciation (saṁnyāsa), or Yoga or Devotion, and that that was the

principal subject-matter of proof; but that as the war had already started, the Blessed Lord has here and there briefly praised in His preaching the worth of Action and allowed Arjuna to complete the war which had been started; that is to say, the completion of the war must not be looked upon as the central or the most important factor but something which was auxilliary or merely an arthavāda. But by such a spineless argument, the upakrama, upasamhāra and phala of the Gītā is not satisfactorily accounted for. The Blessed Lord had to show the importance and necessity of performing at all costs the duties enjoined by one's dharma while life lasts, and the Gītā has nowhere advanced any such hollow argument as the one mentioned above for doing so; and if such an argument had been advanced, that would never have appealed to such an intelligent and critical person like Arjuna. When the prospect of a terrible clan-destruction was staring him in the face, whether to fight or not, and, if fighting was the proper course, then how that could be done without incurring sin, was the principal question before him; and however much one tries to do so, it will be impossible to dismiss, as an arthavāda, the definite answer given to this principal question in the following words, namely:— "Fight with a disinterested frame of mind," or "Perform Action". Doing so would amount to treating the owner of the house as a guest. I do not say that the Gītā has not preached Vedānta, or Devotion or the Pātañjala Yoga at all. But the combination of these three subjects which has been made by the Gītā must be such that thereby Arjuna, who was

on the horns of a terrible dilemma of conflicting principles of morality, and who had on that account become so confused about his proper duty as to say:— "Shall I do this, or shall I do that? ", could find a sinless path of duty and feel inclined to perform the duties enjoined on him by his status as a warrior. In short, it is perfectly clear that the proper preaching in this place would be of Energism (pravṛtti) and that, as all other

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things are only supporting Energism, that is, as they are all auxiliary, the purport of the Gītā religion must also be to support Energism, that is, to support Action. But no commentator has properly explained what this Energistic purport is and how that implied moral can be authoritatively based on Vedānta philosophy. Whichever commentator is taken, he totally neglects the upakrama of the Gītā, that is, its first, chapter and the concluding upasamhāra, and the phala, and becomes engrossed in discussing from a Renunciatory point of view how the preaching in the Gītā about the Realisation of the Brahman or about Devotion support their respective cults: as though it would be a great sin to link together a permanent union between Knowledge and Devotion on the one hand and Action (karma) on the other! The doubt mentioned by me was experienced by one of these commentators who said that the Bhagavadgītā must be interpreted keeping before one's eyes the life of Śrī Kṛṣṇa

himself; [1] and the Non-Dualistic philosopher Paramahansa Śrī Kṛṣṇānanda Svāmi, who has recently died at Kāśī (Benares) has in the short Sanskrit monograph written by him on the Gītā entitled Gītārtha-parāmarṣa made the definite statement that: "tasmāt gītā nāma Brahnavidyāmūlaṁ nītiśāstraṁ" – i.e., "therefore, the Gītā is the philosophy of Duty, that is, the philosophy of Ethics based on the science of the Brahman (brahnavidyā)" [2] The German philosopher Prof. Deussen, in his work called The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads has given expression to the same thoughts in one place with reference to the Bhagavadgītā, and several other

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Eastern and Western critics of the Gītā have expressed the same opinion. Nevertheless, none of these persons have thoroughly examined the Gītā or attempted to clearly and in

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- [1] The name of this commentator and some extracts from his commentary were communicated to me many years ago by a respectable scholar, but I cannot trace that letter anywhere in the confusion of my papers; and I have also forgotten the name of the commentator; so I have to beg this respectable scholar to communicate that information to me again if he chances to read this book.
- [2] Śrī Kṛṣṇānanda Svāmi has written four monographs on this subject which are named Śrī Gītā-Rahasya, Gītārtha-prakāśa, Gītārtha-parāmarṣa and Gītā-sāroddhāra, and they have all been collected and published together at Rajkot. The above quotation is from the Gītārtha-parāmarṣa.

detail show how all the statements, deductions, or chapters in it can be explained as being connected together on the basis of the philosophy of Energism (karma). On the other hand, Prof. Deussen has said in his book that such a conclusion would be very difficult to justify. [1] Therefore, the principal object of this book is to critically examine the Gītā, in that light and to show the complete consistency which is to be found in it. But before I do so, it is necessary to deal in greater detail with the nature of the difficulty experienced by Arjuna as a result of his having been caught on the horns of the dilemma of mutually contradictory ethical principles, for otherwise, the readers will not realise the true bearing of the subject-matter of the Gītā. Therefore, in order to understand the nature of these difficulties in the shape of having to decide between Action and Inaction and to explain how a man on many occasions becomes non-plussed by being caught in the dilemma of "Shall I do this, or shall I do that?", we shall now first consider the numerous illustrations of such occasions, which are come across in our sacred books and especially in the Mahābhārata.

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[1] Prof. Deussen's The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads, P. 362, English Translator. 1906.



# CHAPTER II.

## THE DESIRE TO KNOW THE RIGHT ACTION

### (KARMA-JIJÑĀSĀ.)

kiṁ karma kim akarmeti kavayo 'py atra mohitāḥ | [1]

~ Gītā (4.16).

The critical position in which Arjuna had found himself in the commencement of the Bhagavadgītā, as a result of being caught between two mutually contradictory paths of duty and become doubtful about his proper duty is not something unique. The cases of persons who, taking up Asceticism (saṁnyāsa), give up the world and live in the woods, or of self-centred weaklings who meekly submit to all kinds of injustice in the world without a murmur, are different. But those great and responsible persons, who have to live in society and to do their duties consistently with righteousness and morality often

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[1] "What is doable (right action), and what it is not-doable (wrong action or inaction) is a question which puzzles even sages". In this place, the word "akarma" (not-doable) must be interpreted as meaning 'absence of action' or 'wrong action' according to the context. See my commentary on the verse.

find themselves in such circumstances. Whereas Arjuna got confused and was filled with this desire to know his proper duty in the commencement of the war, Yudhiṣṭhira, was in the same position when he was later on faced with the duty of performing the śraddhā ceremonies of the various relatives who had been killed in the war; and the Śāntiparva has come to be written in order to pacify the doubts by which he was then puzzled. Nay, great writers have written charming poems or excellent dramas based on such puzzling situations of duty and non-duty which they have either found in history or imagined. For instance, take the drama Hamlet of the well-known English dramatist Shakespeare. The uncle of the Prince of Denmark, named Hamlet had murdered his ruling brother, that is, the father of Hamlet, and married his widow and seized the throne. This drama has portrayed in an excellent manner the state of mind of the young and tender-hearted Hamlet, who on this

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occasion was faced with the puzzle as to whether he should put to death his sinful uncle and discharge his filial obligations towards his father, or pardon him, because he was his own uncle, his step-father, as also the ruling king; and how he later on became, insane because he did not find any proper path-shower and guardian like Śrī Kṛṣṇa; and how ultimately the poor fellow met his end while vacillating between "to be" and

"not to be". Shakespeare has described another similar occasion in a drama of his called Coriolanus. Coriolanus was a brave Roman potentate, who had been driven out of Rome by the citizens of Rome and on that account had gone and joined hands with the enemies of Rome, whom he promised never to forsake. After some time, the camp of the hostile army under his command came to be placed outside the gates of Rome itself, he having attacked and defeated the Romans and conquered territory after territory. Then, the women of Rome put forward the wife and the mother of Coriolanus and advised him as to his duty to his motherland, and made him break the promise given by him to the enemies of Rome. There are numerous other similar examples of persons being puzzled as to duty and non-duty in the ancient or the modern history of the world. But it is not necessary for us to go so far. We may say that our epic Mahābhārata is a mine of such critical occasions. In the beginning of the book (Ā. 2), while describing the Bhārata, Vyāsa himself has qualified it by the adjectives "sukṣmārtha-nyāyayutam" (i.e., filled with the discrimination between subtle positions) and "aneka samayānvitam" (i.e., replete with numerous critical occasions), and he has further praised it by saying that, not only does it contain the philosophy of Ethics (dharma-śāstra), the philosophy of wealth (artha-śāstra) and the philosophy of Release (mokṣa- śāstra) but that in this matter, "yad ihāsti tad anyatra yan nehāsti na tat kvacit", i.e., "what is to be found here, is to be found everywhere and what cannot be found here can be found

nowhere else". (Ā. 62.53). It may even be said that the Bhārata has been expanded into the 'Mahābhārata' for the sole purpose of explaining to ordinary persons in the simple form of stories how our great ancient personages have behaved in numerous difficult circumstances of life; for,

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otherwise, it would not be necessary to write 18 parvas (cantos) for describing merely the Bhārata war or the history known as 'Jaya'.

Some persons may say:— "Keep aside the case of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna; why is it necessary for you or us to enter into such deep questions? Have not Manu and the other writers of the Smṛtis laid down in their own books, clear rules as to how persons should behave in worldly life? If one follows the ordinary commandments prescribed for everybody in all religions, such as: 'Do not commit murder', 'Do not hurt others', 'Act according to moral principles', 'Speak the truth', 'Respect your elders and your preceptors', 'Do not commit theft or adultery', etc., where is the necessity of entering into these puzzling questions?" But I will in reply ask them:— "So long as every human being in this world has not started living according to these rules, should virtuous people, by their virtuous conduct, allow themselves to be caught in the nets

spread by rascals or should they give measure for measure by way of retaliation and protect themselves?" Besides, even if these ordinary commandments are considered as unchanging, and authoritative, yet responsible persons are very often faced with such situations, that two or more of these commandments become applicable simultaneously; and then, the man is puzzled as to whether he should follow this commandment or that commandment, and loses his reason. The situation into which Arjuna had found himself was such a situation; and the Mahābhārata contains in several places critical descriptions of similar circumstances having engulfed other illustrious persons besides Arjuna. For instance, let us take the precept of "Harmlessness" (ahimsā) which is one of the five eternal moral principles enjoined by Manu (Manu. 10.63) as binding on all the four castes namely, "ahimsā satyam asteyaṁ śaucam indriya-nigrahaḥ" i.e., Harmlessness (ahimsā), Truth (satya), Not-stealing (asteya), Purity of the body, the mind, and of speech (śauca), and Control of the organs (indriya-nigraha). "ahimsā paramo dharmah" i.e., "Harmlessness is the highest religion" (Ma. Bhā. Ā. 11.13.), is a principle which has been accepted as preeminent not only in our Vedic religion but in all other- religions. The religious commandments given in the Buddhistic.

and Christian sacred books have given the first place to the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill' as has been done by Manu. 'Himsā' does not mean only destroying life but also includes, harming the minds or the bodies of others. Therefore, 'ahimsā' means 'not harming in any way any living being'. Patricide, matricide, homicide, etc. are the most terrible forms of himsā and this religion of Harmlessness is looked upon as the highest, religion according to all people in the world. But, assuming for the sake of argument that some villain has come, with a weapon in his hands to kill you, or to commit rape on your wife or daughter, or to set fire to your house, or to steal all your wealth, or to deprive you of your immovable property; and, there is nobody there who can protect you; then should you close your eyes and treat with unconcern such a villain (ātatāyin) saying:— "ahimsā paramo dharmah?" or should you, as much as possible, punish him if he does not listen to reason? Manu says:—

gurum vā bālavrddhau vā brāhmaṇam vā bahuśrutam |

ātatāyinaṁ āyāntaṁ hanyād evāvicārayan ||

i.e., "such an ātatāyin that is, villain, should be killed without the slightest compunction and without considering whether he is a preceptor (guru) or an old man or a child or learned Brahmin". For the Śāstras say:— on such an occasion, the killer does not incur the sin of killing, but the villain is killed by his own unrighteousness (Manu. 8.350). Not only Manu, but also modern criminal law has accepted the right of self-defence

with some limitations. On these occasions, self-protection is considered to be of higher importance than Harmlessness. The killing of tender infants (bhrūṇa-hatyā) is considered to be the most objectionable of murders; but, if the child is being born by transverse presentation, is it not necessary to cut the child and deliver the mother? The slaughter of animals for the purposes of ritualistic sacrifice (yajña) is considered blameless even by the Vedas (Manu. 5.31); yet, that at least can be avoided by making an animal of flour for purposes of sacrifice (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 337; Anu. 115.56). But how are you going to stop the killing of the numerous micro-organisms with which the air, water, fruit

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etc., and all other places are filled? Arjuna in the Mahābhārata says:—

sūkṣmayonīni bhūtāni tarkagamyāni kāni cit |

pakṣmaṇo 'pi nipātena yeṣāṃ syāt skandhaparyayaḥ ||

(Ma. Bhā. Śān.15.26).

i.e., "there are in this world so many micro-organisms invisible to the naked eye, of which the existence can, however, he imagined, that merely by the moving of one's eye-lids, their limbs will be destroyed!" Then, where is the sense of repeating orally:— "Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not kill"? It is on the

basis of this discrimination, that hunting has been justified in the Anuśāsanaparva (Anu. 116). In the Vana-parva, there is a story that a Brahmin, being urged by anger to destroy a virtuous woman, and being unsuccessful, surrendered himself to that woman; then, that woman sent him to a hunter in order to learn from him the true import of one's duties. This hunter earned his living by selling flesh and he was extremely devoted to his parents. Seeing the way in which the hunter was earning his living, this Brahmin was filled with intense surprise and sorrow. Then the hunter explained to him the true principle of Harmlessness and opened his eyes! Does not everybody eat everybody else in this world? "Jīvo jīvasya jīvanam" (Bhāga. 1.13.46) i.e., "life is the life of life", is an eternal truth; and it is stated not only in the Smṛtis (Manu. 5.28; Ma. Bhā. 15.21) but also in the Upaniṣads (Ve. Sū. 3.4.28; Chān. 5.2.1; Bṛ. 6.1.14) that in times of distress "prāṇasyānam idaṁ sarvaṁ", i.e., "all this is the food for life". If everyone becomes harmless, how is warriorship to continue? And when once warriorship has come to an end, subject-people will have no protectors and anybody will be in a position to destroy anybody else. In short, the ordinary rules of morality are not always sufficient, and even the most principle maxim of Ethics, namely that of Harmlessness, does not escape the necessity of discrimination between the duty and the non-duty.

The Śāstras have recommended the qualities of forgiveness, peace and kindness consistently with Harmlessness, but how



will it be possible to practise peace on all occasions? Prahāda in the Mahābhārata first points out to his grandson Bali, that people will not stop at openly running away with even the

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wife and children of an always peaceful man and he advises Bali as follows:

na śreyaḥ satataṁ tejo na nityaṁ śreyasī kṣamā ।

... ..

tasmān nityaṁ kṣamā tāta paṇḍitair apavāditā ॥

i.e., "Forgiveness in all cases or warlikeness in all cases is not the proper thing. Therefore, O, my son! the wise have mentioned exceptions to the law of forgiveness" (Vana. 28.6, 8). Prahāda has then described some of the occasions which would be proper occasions for forgiveness, but Prahāda does not explain the principle by which these occasions are to be recognised; and if someone takes advantage of the prescribed exceptions, without knowing the occasions when they apply, he will be guilty of misbehaviour; therefore, it is extremely important to understand the principle by which these occasions are to be recognised.

There is another law which has become wholly authoritative and acceptable to everybody in the world, whether old or

young, and male or female, in all countries, and among all religions, and that is the law of Truth. Who can sufficiently praise the worth of Truth? 'Ṛtaṁ' and 'satyaṁ' came into existence before the world. The Vedas extol the worth of Truth by saying that it is satya which controls the firmament, the earth, the air and the other primordial elements. See the incantations: "ṛtaṁ ca satyaṁ cābhīddhāt tapaso 'dhyajāyata" (Ṛ. 10.190.1) i.e., " Law (ṛtaṁ) and Truth (satyaṁ) have been brought into existence after the performance of effulgent penance", and "satyenottabhitā bhūmih" (Ṛ. 10.85.1) i.e. "the Earth has become dignified on account of Truth". The root meaning of the word 'satya' is 'which exists,' that is, 'which never ceases to exist,' or 'which is not touched by the past, present or the future'; and therefore, the value of satya has been properly described by saying:— " there is no religion like Truth, Truth is Parabrahma". The statement: "nāsti satyāt paro dharmah" (Śān. 162.24) i.e., "there is no religion higher than Truth", is found in many places in the Mahābhārata which also says:—

Aśvamedha-sahasraṁ ca satyaṁ ca tulayā dhrtam ।  
aśvamedha-sahasrād dhi satyam eva viśiṣyate ॥

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i.e., " when the respective merits of a thousand aśvamedha yajñas and of Truth were weighed in the scale, it was found

that Truth weighed more" (Ā. 74.102). This refers to the ordinary rule of Truth. Manu in addition says about speaking the truth that:

vācy arthā niyatāḥ sarve vāñmūlā vāgviniḥṣṛtāḥ ।

tañ tu yaḥ stenayed vācañ sa sarvasteya-kṛnnarah ॥

(Manu. 4.256).

i.e., "all the activities of mankind are carried on by speech; there is no other means like speech for the communication of thoughts; then, that man who sullies this fountain-head of speech, which is the basic foundation of all these activities, that is to say, the man who is false to his own speech must be said to be despoiling everything at one stroke". Therefore, says Manu: "satyapūtām vaded vācañ" (Manu. 6.46) that is, "Speak only that which has been purified by Truth." In the Upaniṣads also, the law of Truth has been given a higher place than all other laws, in the following words: "satyañ vada । dharmāñ cara ।" (Tai. 1.11.1) that is: "Speak the truth, do what is right "; and Bhīṣma, who was lying on the bed of arrows, after having in the Śāntiparva and the Anuśāsanaparva taught to Yudhiṣṭhira all the various laws, has before yielding up his breath preached to everyone the law of Truth as being the sum and substance of all laws, in the following words: "satyeṣu yatitavyañ vaḥ satyañ hi paramañ balañ" i.e. "You should strive for Truth, in as much as Truth is the highest power." (Ma. Bhā. Anu. 167.50). "We find that the very same laws have been adopted into the Buddhistic and Christian religions.

Can anyone dream that there can be exceptions to this eternally-lasting law of Truth, which is thus established on all hands? But life in this world, which is full of villains, is difficult. Suppose, you have seen some persons escaping from the hands of marauders and hiding in a thick forest; and the marauders, who follow them with naked swords in their hands, stand before you and ask you, where those people are! What answer will you give? Will you speak the truth or will you save the lives of unoffending and innocent people? I ask this

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question because, preventing the murder of innocent people is according to the Śāstras a religion, as highly important as Truth itself. Manu says:—"nāpṛṣṭaḥ kasyacid brūyān na cānyāyena pṛcchataḥ" (Manu. 2.110; Ma. Bhā. Śān. 287.34) – that is, "Do not speak to anyone unless he questions you, and if someone asks you a question unjustly, then, do not give a reply, even if you are questioned"; and, "jānann api hi medhāvī jaḍaval loka ācaret" – i.e. "even if you know the answer simply say: 'hm! hm!' like an ignorant person", and save the situation. Very well; but, is not saying merely: 'Hm! hm!' in effect speaking the untruth? It is stated in many places in the Bhārata itself that: na vyājena cared dharmam", i.e. "do not somehow satisfy yourselves by being false to morality; morality is not deceived,

it is you who are deceived" (Ma. Bhā. Ā. 215.34). But if you cannot save the situation even by saying: 'Hm! hm! ', what is to be done? What will you do if a thief is sitting on your chest with a dagger in his hand and asking you where the money is, and you are sure to lose your life if you do not give a proper reply? The Blessed Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa who understood the inner meaning of all laws says to Arjuna in the Karṇaparva (Ka. 69.61), after giving him the illustration of highway robbers mentioned above, and later on in the Satyāñṛtādhyāya, of the Śāntiparva, Bhīṣma also says to Yudhiṣṭhira:—

akūjanena cen mokṣā nāvakūjet kathamcana ।

avaśyaṁ kūjitavye vā śaṅkaran vāpy akūjanāt ।

śreyas tatrāñṛtaṁ vaktuṁ satyād iti vicāritam ॥

(Śān. 109.15, 16.)

i.e. "if you can escape without speaking, then do not speak under any circumstances: but if it is necessary to speak, or if by not speaking you may rouse suspicion in the mind (of another), then, telling a lie has been found, after mature deliberation, to be much better than speaking the truth." Because, the law of Truth is not confined to speech, and that conduct which leads to the benefit of all, cannot be looked upon as objectionable merely on the ground that the vocal expression is untruthful. That by which everybody will

harmd is neither Truth nor Harmlessness. Nārada says to Śuka in the Śāntiparva on the authority of Sanatkumāra:–

satyasya vacanaṁ śreyaḥ satyād api hitaṁ vadet |  
yad bhūta-hitam atyantam etat satyaṁ mataṁ mama ||

(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 329.13; 287.19).

i.e., "speaking the truth is the proper thing; but rather than truth, speak that which will lead to the welfare of all; because, that in which the highest welfare of all consists is in my opinion the real Truth". Seeing the words 'yad bhūta-hitam', one will certainly think of the modern western Utilitarians, and these words may be looked upon as an interpolation. I, therefore, say that these words have appeared more than twice in the Vanaparva of the Bhārata in the conversation between the Brahmin and the hunter; and in one of those places, there is a verbal change as: "ahiṁsā satya-vacanaṁ sarva-bhūta-hitam param" (Vana. 206.73), and in another place, there is another verbal difference as: "yad bhūta-hitam atyantam tat satyam iti dhāraṇā" (Vana. 208.4). There is no other reason for the fact that the truthful Yudhiṣṭhira confused Droṇa by the ambiguous answer:– "naro vā kuñjaro vā" i.e., "either the man (named Aśvatthāmā) or the elephant", and the same rule applies to other similar things. Our religion does not ask us to save the life of a murderer by telling a lie. Because, as the Śāstras themselves have prescribed the punishment of death for a murderer, such a person is certainly punishable or fit for

death, All the Śāstras say that one who bears false witness on such or similar occasions, goes to hell personally, and also sends to the same place seven or more of his ancestors (Manu. 8.89 – 49; Ma. Bhā. Ā. 7.3). But what are you going to do when, as in the illustration of the highway robbers given above from the Karṇa-parva, speaking the truth will lead to innocent persons being unnecessarily killed? The English writer Green has in his book named Prolegomena to Ethics said that books on moral philosophy are silent on this question. It is true that Manu and Yājñavalkya look upon such situations as exceptions to the law of Truth. But as even according to them,

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untruthfulness is the less praiseworthy conduct, they have prescribed a penance for it in the following words:

tat pāvanāya nirvāpyaś caruḥ sāraśvato dvijaiḥ ||

(Yājñ. 2.83; Manu. 8.104 – 6).

i.e., "Brahmins should expiate that sin by offering the 'Sārasvata' oblation".

Those learned Western philosophers who have not been surprised by the exceptions to the law of Harmlessness, have attempted to blame our law-givers on account of the exceptions to the law of Truth! I will, therefore, explain here

what, authoritative Christian preachers and Western writers on Ethics have said on this subject. The following words of St. Paul who was a disciple of Christ namely: "for, if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto His glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner?" (The Romans 3.7) are to be found in the New Testament of the Bible; and Millman, who has written a history of the Christian religion says that ancient Christian preachers very often followed the same principle. Moralists will not in the present times, as a rule, consider it justifiable to delude people or to cheat them and convert them. Nevertheless, even they do not say that the law of Truth is without exception. Take, for instance, the book on Ethics written by the scholar Sidgwick, which is being taught in our colleges. Sidgwick decides questions of morality, where there are doubts as to what is doable and what not-doable, by the rule of the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number'; and by the test of that principle he has ultimately laid down that: "We do not think that truth ought always to be told to children, or madmen, or invalids, or by advocates; and we are not sure that we are bound to tell it to enemies or robbers, or even to persons who ask questions which they know they have no right to ask (if a mere refusal to answer would practically reveal an important secret)". (Sidgwick's Methods of Ethics Book III Chapter XI, Paragraph 6, p. 355, 7th Edition. Also see pp. 315 – 317). Mill has included this exception to the law of Truth in his book on Ethics. [1] Besides these exceptions,

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[1] Mill's Utilitarianism, Chapter II, pp. 33 – 34 (15th Ed. Longman's 1907).



Sidgwick also says in his book that: "Again, though we esteem candour and scrupulous sincerity in most persons, we scarcely look for them in a diplomatist who has to conceal secrets, or in a tradesman describing his goods, (for purchasers can find out the defects of what they buy)". [1] In a third place, he says that similar exceptions are made in favour of Christian missionaries and soldiers. Leslie Stephen, another Western writer, who discusses Ethics from the material point of view, gives other similar illustrations and says ultimately that:—"It seems to me that the known consequences of an action must always be relevant to its morality. If I were absolutely certain that a lie would do good, I should certainly hesitate before speaking the truth, and the certainty might be of such a kind as to make me think it a duty to lie ". [2] Green, who has considered the subject of Ethics from the metaphysical (adhyātma) point of view, definitely says with reference to such occasions, that in these cases the principles of Ethics do not satisfy the doubts of men; and ultimately comes to the conclusion that: "A true Moral Philosophy does not recognise any value in conformity

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[1] Sidgwick's Methods of Ethics, Book IV Chap. III, Para. 7. P. 454, 7th Ed. and Book II Chap. V Para. 3, P. 169.

[2] Leslie Stephen's, Science of Ethics, Cha. IX. Para 29, p, 369 2nd Ed) "And the certainty might be of such a kind as to make me think it a duty to lie".

to the universal rule, simply as such, but only in that which ordinarily issues in such conformity, viz., the readiness to sacrifice every lower inclination in the desire to do right for the sake of doing it ". [1] The same is the opinion of other Western writers on Ethics, such as, Bain, Whewell, and others. [2]

If you compare the rules laid down by the Western philosophers mentioned above, with the rules laid down by our

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lawgivers, you will clearly see who had greater respect for Truth. It is true that our religions texts (Śāstras) say:

na narmayuktaṁ vacanaṁ hinasti  
na strīṣu rājan na vivāhakāle ।  
prāṇātyaye sarvadhanāpahāre  
pañcāṅgātāny āhur apātakāni ॥

(Ma. Bhā. Ā. 82.16).

i.e., " There is no sin in speaking the untruth on the following five occasions, namely, if in joke or while speaking with women

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[1] Green's Prolegomena to Ethics, Para 315 p. 379, 5th Cheaper Edition.

[2] Bain's Mental and Moral Science, p. 445 (Ed. 1875); Whewell's Elements of Morality, Bk. II, Ch. XIII and XIV, (4th Ed. 1864).

or at the time of marriage, or if your life is in danger, or for protecting your own property." (See also Śān. 109 and Manu. 8.110). But that does not mean that one must always speak the untruth in speaking with women, and these exceptions are to be understood in the same way in the Mahābhārata, as those mentioned by Prof. Sidgwick with reference to "children, or madmen or invalids". But Western philosophers, who have shelved the metaphysical as also the next-world view of the matter, have gone further and have barefacedly permitted even merchants to tell any lies they like for their own benefit, which is a thing our lawgivers have not done! It is true that where there is a conflict between Verbal Truth, that is to say, truthful speech, and Practical Truth, that is to say, the benefit of humanity, they have permitted that the situation may be saved by telling a lie, if, from the practical point of view, that is unavoidable. Nevertheless, as they look upon the moral laws of Truth etc. as permanent, that is to say, immutable under all circumstances, they have considered this speaking of untruth as a sin to a certain extent, from the next-world point of view, and have prescribed relative penances. Purely materialistic philosophers will say, that these penances are mere bugbears. But as those who prescribed these penances or those for whom these penances were prescribed, were not of the same opinion, one has got to say that both these classes look upon these exceptions to the law of Truth as the less proper course of conduct; and the same moral has been conveyed by the relative traditional stories on this point. For instance,

Yudhiṣṭhira, on a difficult occasion, half- heartedly and only once, uttered the words "naro vā

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kuñjaro vā." But on that account his chariot, which till then used to move in the air about four inches above the surface of the earth began to move in contact with the earth like the chariots of other people, and he had also to spend a few hours in hell, as has been stated in the Mahābhārata itself (Droṇa. 191.57, 58 and Svargā. 3.15). In the same way, as Arjuna killed Bhīṣma, taking shelter behind Śikhaṇḍi, though according to the laws of warfare, he had to suffer defeat later on at the hands of his son Babhruvāhana, as has been stated in the Aśvamedhaparva (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 81. 10). From this it will be seen that these exceptions, which have been contingently permitted, are not to be treated as the rule or as authority, and that our religious writers have drawn, the following ultimate philosophical proposition, namely:

ātmaheतोऽप्यारथे वा नरमाहस्यैश्वर्यात् तथा ।

ये मृसा न वदन्ति ते नराऽस्वर्गगमिनाः ॥

that is: "those persons alone attain heaven, who never speak the untruth in this world, whether for their own benefit, or for the benefit of others, or in joke;" as was explained by Mahādeva to Pārvatī. (Ma. Bhā. Anu. 144.19).

The law of Truth consists in performing one's promises or vows. Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Bhīṣma both said, that the Himalaya might move from its site, or fire itself would become cold, but what they had said would not be otherwise (Ma. Bhā. Ā. 103 and U. 81.48); and even Bhartṛhari has described righteous persons in the following terms:—

tejasvinaḥ sukkham asūn api samtyajanti ।

satyavratavysanino na punaḥ pratijñām ॥

(Nitiśataka.110)

that is: "illustrious i.e. high-principled persons will willingly sacrifice their lives, but will not break a vow". In the same way, the vows of Dāśarathī Rāmchandra of being true to his speech and shooting only one arrow have become as famous as his vow of monogamy, as appears from: "dviḥ śaraṁ nābhisaṁdhatte Rāmo dvir nābhībhaṣate" i.e., "Śrī Rāma had not to draw an arrow twice nor did he prevaricate" — (Subhāṣita); and there are tales in the Purāṇas; that Hariścandra served as a domestic for drawing water in the home of a burner of dead

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bodies in order to carry out a promise which he had given in a dream. But, on the other hand, it is stated in the Vedas that

even the gods themselves broke the pledges made by them with Vṛtra or found out some loop-holes in them and killed Vṛtra; and the murder of Hiraṇyakaśipu is justified in the Purāṇas on the same basis. Besides, some agreements made in ordinary life are such as are considered unlawful or unfit for observance according to law. A similar story is related in the Mahābhārata with reference to Arjuna. Arjuna had made a vow that he would immediately behead any person who asked him to surrender his Gāṇḍiva bow to another. Later on, when Karṇa had defeated Yudhiṣṭhira in the war, and Yudhiṣṭhira naturally said to him (Arjuna) in despair: "What has been the use of your Gāṇḍiva bow to us? Throw it away from your hands", Arjuna rose, sword in hand, to behead Yudhiṣṭhira. But as Śrī Kṛṣṇa was near him at the time, he critically expounded to him the religion of Truth from the philosophical point of view, and said to him:—"You are a fool, you do not understand the subtle points of morality, and you must learn them from your elders; you have not learnt at the feet of elders – 'na vṛddhāḥ sevitās tvayā'. If you wish only to be true to your vow, then deprecate Yudhiṣṭhira, because for respectable persons, deprecation is as painful as death, etc."; and he thus saved him from the sin of murder of an elder brother which he would have thoughtlessly committed, as has been stated in the Karṇaparva. (Ma. Bhā. Karṇa. 69). The discrimination between Truth and Falsehood which was made by Śrī Kṛṣṇa on this occasion, has been subsequently preached by Bhīṣma to Yudhiṣṭhira in the Satyānṛtādhyāya of the Śāntiparva (Śān.

109); and all must bear it in mind in relation to the affairs of ordinary life. Yet, it is difficult to explain how to recognise these subtle exceptions, and my readers will readily notice that although the law of fraternity was in this particular case looked upon as superior to the law of veracity, yet, the occasion mentioned in the Gītā was just the opposite, and there the warrior-religion has been pronounced to be superior to the law of fraternity.

If there is so much difference of opinion with reference to Harmlessness (ahimsā) and Veracity (satya), then why should

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one be surprised if the game line of reasoning is applied to the third common law, namely of Not-Stealing (asteya)? If stealing or taking away by force that wealth which a man has lawfully acquired is permitted, then people will stop accumulating wealth, and all will suffer; and chaos will reign as a result of the arrangement of society being broken up. But, there are exceptions to this rule. When such a calamity (āpatti) arises that food cannot be had, whether for money or by labour or for charity on account of a general famine, shall we look upon as a sinner, some person who thinks of saving his life by committing theft? There is a story in the Mahābhārata that when such a difficult contingency befell Viśvāmitra, as a result

of famine for twelve consecutive years, he was on the point of saving his life by stealing a leg of dog's flesh hung up in the home of a butcher (Śān. 141), and by eating that uneatable food; thereupon, this butcher gave him. much advice based on the Śāstras, not to commit the sin of eating such uneatable food, and that too by theft, and quoted:– "pañca pañcanakhā bhakṣyāḥ" (Manu. 5.18). [1] But Viśvāmitra rejected that advice, saying:

pibanty evodakam gāvo maṇḍukeṣu ruvatsv api |  
na te 'dhikāro dharme 'sti mā bhūr ātmapraśamsakaḥ ||

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- [1] Out of the animals who have five toes, such as, the dog, the monkey etc. Manu and Yājñavalkya have prescribed the porcupine (which has arrow-like hair), sallaka, (this is a kind of a porcupine), the iguana, the tortoise, and the hare as edible (Manu 5. 18, Yājñā. 1.177). Manu has included in the list also the 'khaḍga' that is, the rhinoceros; but commentators say that there is a doubt about that animal. If this doubtful case is omitted, only five animals remain, of which the flesh is edible, and this is what is meant by the words:–"pañca pañcanakhā bhakṣyāḥ" i.e., "it is only five five-toed animals which are edible". Still, the vyavasāyātmikā writers interpret this as meaning that, those who are allowed to eat flesh should not eat the flesh of any five-toed animals except these; and not that one must necessarily eat the flesh of these animals. This technical interpretation is known as 'pañcanakhā'. The rule "pañca pañcanakhā bhakṣyāḥ" is an illustration of this 'pañcanakhā'. Where flesh-eating is itself unlawful, the eating of the flesh of these animals is also unlawful.



that is:– "butcher! cows do not stop drinking water, although frogs remonstrate. Keep quiet! you have no right to explain principles of morality to me, do not boast unnecessarily". Viśvāmitra has on this occasion also said:– "jīvitam maraṇāt śreyo jīvan dharmam avāpnuyāt" i.e., "if one remains alive, then he can think of religion; and therefore, even from the point of view of religion, keeping alive is better than dying"; and Manu has given the illustration not only of Viśvāmitra but also of Ajīgarta, Vāmadeva, and other ṛṣis who have, in similar circumstances, behaved similarly (Manu. 10.105 – 108). The English writer Hobbes says in his book that: "If in a great famine, he takes the food by force or stealth, which he cannot obtain for money nor charity; or, in defence of his life, snatch away another man's sword, he is totally excused for the reason next before alleged"; [1] and Mill has said that in such circumstances, it is the duty of every human being to save his own life even by committing theft.

But are there no exceptions to this theory of Viśvāmitra that:– 'Keeping alive is better than dying'? Keeping alive is not the only thing worth doing in this world! Even crows keep alive, for many years, by eating the piṇḍa offerings. Therefore, Vīrapatnī Vidulā says to her son that:– "Rather than that you should rot

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[1] Hobbes' Leviathan, Part II Chap. XXVII P. 139, (Morley's Universal Library Edition); Mill's, Utilitarianism, Chap. V. p.95 (15th Ed.). – "Thus, to save a life, it may not only be allowable, but a duty to steal etc."

in the bed or remain cooped up in the house for a hundred years, it is better that you show warrior- like prowess even for a few hours and then die" – "muhūrtaṁ jvalitaṁ śreyo na ca dhūmāyitaṁ ciraṁ" (Ma. Bhā. U. 132.15). If one is bound to die either to-day or to-morrow or at any rate after a hundred years (Bhāg. 10.1.38; Gī. 2.27), then why be afraid of it or cry or dread it or lament? From the metaphysical point of view, the Self (Ātman) is eternal and never dies. Therefore, in considering the question of death, all that one has to consider is the body which has fallen to one's lot according to one's destiny (prārabdha). This body is perishable in any case. But in as much as this perishable human body is the only means by which one can perform whatever is

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to be performed in this world for the benefit of the Ātman, even Manu says: "ātmānaṁ satataṁ rakṣet dārair api dhanair api"— i.e. "it is better first to protect one's Self (ātman) before protecting one's wife, children or property (7.213). Yet, noble souls have willingly sacrificed their lives in the fire of duty, in order to obtain something much more permanent than this perishable human body, e.g. for their God or religion, or for the sake of truth, or for acting according to their avowed purpose or sacred vow, or their professed course of conduct, or for protecting their reputation, or for the sake of success, or for the benefit of the entire world! There is a story in the

Raghuvarṁśa that Dilīpa, while offering his body to a lion in order to protect the cow of Vaśiṣṭha from him, said to him: "People like me are indifferent towards the human body which is made up of the five elements; therefore, look at my virtuous body rather than at my physical body" (Raghu. 2. 57) and the story of Jīmūtavāhana having sacrificed his own body to an eagle in order to protect the lives of serpents, is to be found in the Kathāsaritsāgara, as also in the Nāgānanda drama. In the Mṛcchakaṭika (10. 27) Cārudatta says:

na bhīto maraṇād asmi kevalam dūṣitam yaśaḥ ।

viśuddhasya hi me mṛtyuḥ putrajanmasamaḥ kila ॥

that is: "I am not afraid of death; I am unhappy only because my reputation will be tarnished. If my reputation remains untarnished, then even if I have to suffer death, I will be as happy about it as if a son were born to me"; and on this same principle, the king Śibi, in order to protect a kapota bird, which had surrendered itself to him, took the form of a śyena bird and cut off pieces of flesh from his own body and offered them to the Dharma who was hunting the kapota bird; and when a sword made out of the bones of a ṛṣi named Dadhīci was needed for killing Vṛtra, the enemy of the gods, all the gods went to that ṛṣi and said to him: "śarīratyāgaṁ lokahitārthaṁ bhavān kartum arhati " i.e., "Ṛṣi, be pleased to give up your life for the sake of the benefit of all", and thereupon, that ṛṣi most willingly gave up his life and allowed the gods to take his bones. These stories are to be found

respectively in the Vanaparva and the Śāntiparva of the Bhārata (Vana. 100 and 131; Śān. 342). When the god Sūrya (Sun) came to know that Indra was going to the most generous Karṇa in the form of a Brahmin for begging from him the shield and ear-ornaments (kavaca-kunḍala) with which he had come to birth, he (Sūrya), warned Karṇa not to part with the same by gift to anybody and said to him that though he (Karṇa) was known as a most magnanimous person, yet he should not part with the shield and ear-ornaments to anybody, as his life would be in danger if he did so; and "mr̥tasya kīrtiḥ kiṃ kāryam" i.e., "once he was dead, fame would be of no use to him." Hearing this message of the Sun-god, Karṇa gave him the fearless reply that: "jīvitenaiva me rakṣyā kīrtis tad viddhi me vrataṃ" i.e., "I do not care, if I lose my life, but protecting my reputation is my avowed purpose" (Ma. Bhā. Vana. 299. 38). I may even say that such warlike doctrines as: "If you die you will go to heaven and if you win, you will enjoy the wealth of the earth" (Gī. 2.37) or "svadharmaṃ nidhanaṃ śreyah" (Gī. 3.35), i.e., "Even if you meet your death, in acting according to your own religion, yet there is virtue in that", are based on the same principle; and consistently with that principle Śrī Samartha Rāmadāsa Svāmi has preached that: "If you think of your reputation, you will have no happiness and if you pursue happiness, you will have to sacrifice your reputation" (Dāsa.

12.10.19; 19.10.25); and that therefore: "When you have shed your body, your renown should survive you; O my mind! righteous persons should act in this way". Nevertheless the questions: "What is the use of renown after you are dead, though it may be true that by doing good to others you obtain renown?" or, "Why should a righteous man prefer death to disgrace? (Gī. 2.34), or prefer doing good to others to saving his own life?" will not be satisfactorily answered unless one enters into the consideration of the Self and the Non-self (ātmānātma); and even if these questions are answered otherwise, yet in order to understand on what occasions it is proper to sacrifice one's life and when it is not proper to do so, one has also to consider the question of the philosophy of Action and Non-Action (karmākarma); otherwise, far from acquiring the glory of

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having sacrificed one's life, one will have incurred the sin of having foolishly committed suicide.

The religion of worshipping and serving one's mother, father, preceptor, etc., who are worshipful persons, as if they were deities, is looked upon as an important religion out of the several general and generally accepted religions, Because, if such were not the case, the family, the gurukula and even

society itself will not be properly arranged. Therefore, not only in the Smṛti treatises but also in the Upaniṣads, it is stated that each preceptor after first preaching "satyaṁ vada | dharmāṁ cara | ", i.e., "speak the truth, live righteously" to the disciple who left him to go home after finishing his instruction, used next to preach to him: "mātṛdevo bhava | pitṛdevo bhava | ācāradevo bhava | " i.e. "treat your mother, your father, and your preceptor as if they were gods" (Tai. 1.11.1. and 2); and that is the sum and substance of the chapter on the conversation between the Brahmin and the hunter in the Mahābhārata (Vana. 213). But even in this religion, unexpected difficulties arise. Manu has said:—

upādhyāyāṁ daśācāryaḥ ācāryaṇaṁ śataṁ pitā |  
sahasraṁ tu pitṛṇ mātā gauraveṇātiricyate ||

(Manu. 2.145).

i.e., " the preceptor is more in worth than ten lecturers, the father is worth more than a hundred preceptors, and the mother is worth more than a thousand fathers". Yet, it is a well-known story that because his mother had committed a grievous sin, Paraśurāma, at the instance of his father, cut her throat (Vana. 116.14); and in the Cirakārikopākhyāna of the Śāntiparva (Śān. 265) the question of the relative propriety of killing one's mother at the behest of one's father or of disobeying one's father, has been considered in all its bearings with arguments pro and con in a separate chapter by itself.

From this it will be seen that the practice of discussing such subtle positions in life from the ethical point of view was fully in vogue at the date of the Mahābhārata. Everyone is conversant with the story of Śrī Rāmacandra having at the behest of his father willingly accepted banishment into the forests for 14 years in order to give effect to the promise made by his father. But the

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principle which has been enunciated above with reference to the mother, has occasionally to be applied to the case of the father. For instance, if after a son has become a king by his own prowess, he has occasion to try some crime committed by his father, should he in his capacity as a king, punish his father or let him off because he is his father? Manu says:

pitācāryaḥ suhṛn mātā bhāryā putraḥ purohitaḥ ।

nādaṇḍyo nāma rājño 'sti yaḥ svadharme na tiṣṭhati ॥

i.e., "May he be a father or a preceptor or a friend or a son or a priest, may she be a mother, or a wife, if he or she have not behaved according to their own duties, they are not unpunishable for the king; that is, the king must give them condign punishment" (Manu. 8.335; Ma. Bhā. Śān. 121. 60). Because, in this situation, the religion of sonhood is inferior to the religion of kingship. And it is stated both in the Bhārata

and the Rāmāyaṇa, that the most illustrious King Sagara, belonging to the Sūryavaṁśa banished his son, acting on this principle, because he found that his son was unreasonable and ill-behaved and was harassing his subjects. (Ma. Bhā. 107; Rāma. 1.38). Even in the Manu-Smṛti, there is a story that a ṛṣi named Āngirasa, having acquired excellent knowledge already at a tender age, his uncles (paternal and maternal) and other elders began to learn at his feet; on one such occasion Āngirasa, in addressing them, naturally used the words: 'my children' which are used by a teacher in addressing his pupils - "putrakā iti hovāca jñānena parigr̥hya tān" i.e. "having imparted knowledge to them, he addressed them as 'my children'!" – Then what an uproar arose! All the old people became livid with anger, and were convinced that the boy had become arrogant; and they made a complaint to the gods that he should be properly punished. The gods listened to the pleadings on either side, and ultimately gave the decision that the words which Āngirasa had used in addressing them were perfectly proper; because:

na tena vṛddho bhavati yenāsya palitaṁ śiraḥ ।

yo vai yuvāpy adhīyānas taṁ devāḥ sthaviraṁ viduḥ ॥

that is:— "if his hair have become white, a man does not on that account alone, become old; although a man may be young,



yet if he is learned, the gods look upon him as old" (Manu. 2.156; and also Ma. Bhā. Vana. 133.11; Śālyā, 51.47). This principle has been accepted not only by Manu and Vyāsa but also by the Lord Buddha. Because, the first line of the above verse from the Smṛti has been adopted verbatim into the well-known Buddhistic treatise on Ethics, in the Pali language, known as the 'Dhammapada' [1] (Dhammapada, 260); and later on it is said in the same book that the man who has become mature only by age, has lived in vain; and that in order that a person should become truly religious and old, he must have acquired the virtues of veracity, harmlessness etc.; and in another treatise named 'Cullavayya', the Lord Buddha has himself permitted that even if the bhikṣu, (mendicant) who may be preaching may be young, yet he should sit on a high pedestal and preach the religion to other bhikṣus who had

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- [1] The work 'Dhammapada' has been translated into English in the Sacred Books of the East Series Vol. X and the Cullavagga has also been translated into English in the Volumes XVII and XX of the same series. Mr. Yadavarao Varvikar, has also translated the Dhammapada into Marathi, and that was first published in the Kolhapur Granthamala and later on as an independent book. The verse in Pali in the Dhammapada is as follows:

na tena therō hoti yēnassa palitāṃ siro |

paripakko vayo tassa mogha-jīṇṇo ti vuccati ||

the word 'thera' is applied to Buddhist mendicants. It is a corruption from the Sanskrit word "sthavira".

been previously invested into the creed and may be older than him (Cullavagga, 6.13.1). The story of Prahlāda having disobeyed his father Hiraṇyakaśipu, and won the Blessed Lord mentioned in the Purāṇas is well-known; and from these stories it will be seen that as a result of other important considerations coming into existence, one has unavoidably to temporarily forget not only the relationship between the older and the younger in age, but also the universally accepted relationship between father and son. But if, when such an occasion has not arisen, an arrogant son begins to abuse his father, will he not be looked upon as a brute? Bhīṣma has

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said to Yudhiṣṭhira: "gurur garīyān piṭṛto mātṛtaś ceti me matiḥ" (Śān. 108.17), i.e., "the preceptor is superior even to the mother or the father." But it is stated in the Mahābhārata itself, that when the preceptor of the king Marutta had abandoned him for his selfish interests, Marutta said:—

guror apy avaliptasya kāryākāram ajātaḥ ।

utpathapratipannsya nyāyyaṁ bhavati śāsanam ॥

(Ma. Bhā. Ā. 142. 53 – 53).

i.e., "Even a preceptor, who, disregarding what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, takes up arrogantly the wrong path, deserves punishment". This verse has appeared

four times in the Mahābhārata. (Ma. Bhā. Ā. 142.52 – 53; U. 179.24; Śān. 57.7; 140.48). Out of these, the reading in the first reference is as above and in the other references, the fourth part of the verse reads: "daṇḍo bhavati śāśvataḥ" or "parityāgo vidhīyate". But where this verse has appeared in the Valmiki Rāmāyaṇa (Rāmā. 2.21.13), the reading mentioned above is the only reading which has appeared; and therefore, I have adopted it in this book. The fights between Bhīṣma and Paraśurāma and between Arjuna and Droṇa were justified on the same principle and when the preceptors of Prahlaḍa appointed by Hiraṇyakaśipu began to advise him against worshipping the Blessed Lord, he has disregarded their advice him the same principle. In the Śāntiparva, Bhīṣma himself says to Śrī Kṛṣṇa that, although a preceptor may be venerable yet he also must be bound by rules of Ethics; otherwise:

samayatyāgine lubdhān gurūn api ca Keśava |

nihanti samare pāpān kṣatriyaḥ sa hi dharmavit ||

(Śān. 55. 16).

that is: "Oh Keśava, that kṣatriya is truly law-abiding, who kills such persons as break laws, ethical principles, or rules of proper conduct, or is greedy or sinful, notwithstanding that they occupy the position of preceptors." So also, in the Taittirīyopaniṣad, after first stating: "ācāryadevo bhava", i.e., "Treat your preceptor, as a deity", it is immediately afterwards stated that: "yāny asmākaṁ sucaritāni | tāni tvayopāśyāni |

no itarāṇi ll " (Tai. 1.11.2), i.e., "Imitate only such of our actions as are

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good, and disregard the others". From this, it is quite clear that the net advice of the Upaniṣads is that, even if the elders are god-like, because they are preceptors, or parents, yet, do not become addicted to drink, because they were addicted to drink; because, the position of ethical principles or of laws is even higher than that of the mother or the father or the preceptor, etc. The statement of Manu that: "Follow your religion; if anyone destroys his religion, that is to say, disregards it, that religion will, without fail, destroy him." (Manu. 8.14 – 16), has been made on the same principles. The king is a deity who is even more worshipful than the preceptor (Manu. 7. 8, and Ma. Bhā. Śān. 68.40). But, the Manu-Smṛti says that even he does not escape the binding force of laws, and that if he breaks them, he will be destroyed; and the same idea is conveyed by the histories of the two kings Vena and Khanīnetra mentioned in the Mahābhārata (Manu. 7, 41 and 8. 128; Ma. Bhā. Śān. 59. 92 – 100 and Aśva. 4).

Control of the organs is placed on the same level with Harmlessness (ahimsā), Veracity (satya), and Not-stealing (asteya), in the ordinary general religions (Manu. 10. 63). All

the Śāstras contain the advice that Desire (kāma), Anger (krodha) and Avarice (lobha) are the enemies of man, and that unless they are fully conquered, neither he nor society will in any way be benefitted; and it is stated in the Viduranīti, as also in the Bhagavadgītā, that:

trividhaṁ narakasyedaṁ dvāraṁ nāśanam ātmanaḥ ।  
kāmaḥ krodhas tathā lobhas tasmād etat trayam tyajet  
॥

i.e., " Kāma, krodha and lobha are the three gateways of hell; and as they are destructive agents, they must be eschewed" (Gī. 16.21; Ma. Bhā. U. 32.70). But the Blessed Lord has in the Gītā itself described his own form in the following words: "dharmāviruddho bhūteṣu kāmo 'smi Bharatarṣabha" (Gī. 7.11), i.e., "O, Arjuna! I am that Kāma (desire) which exists in the hearts of living things, being consistent with law (dharma)". Therefore, that Kāma (desire) which is inconsistent with dharma is the gateway of hell and other kinds of Kāma are not proscribed by the Blessed Lord; and even Manu has said:—"parityajet arthakāmau yau syātām dharmavarjitau", i.e.,

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"that wealth (artha) and desire (Kāma) which are inconsistent with justice (dharma) should be eschewed" (Manu. 4.176). If

to-morrow all living beings decide to say good-bye to the Lord Kāma, and to observe celibacy the whole of their lives, the entire living creation will come to an end within fifty or at most one hundred years, and the silence of death will reign everywhere; and that creation, in order to save which from destruction, the Blessed Lord takes incarnations every now and then, will within a short time, be destroyed. Kāma and krodha are enemies, it is true, but, when? If you allow them to become uncontrolled. Even Manu and the other writers of the Śāstras have accepted the position that Kāma and krodha are extremely essential, within proper limits, in order that the world should go on (Manu. 5.56). The highest civilisation consists in putting a proper restraint on these powerful mental impulses, and not in totally destroying them. It is stated in the Bhāgavata that:

loke vyavāyāmiṣamadyasevā nityāsti jantor na hi tatra  
codanā |  
vyavasthitis teṣu vivāhayajña-surāgraherāsu nivṛttir  
iṣṭā || (Bhāg. 11.5.11).

i.e., " In this world, it is not necessary to tell anyone to indulge in the enjoyment of sexual intercourse or in eating flesh or drinking wine. These are things which human beings want naturally. And it is in order to systematise these three impulses, that is to say, in order to give them a systematic basis by subjecting them to limitations or restraint, that the writers of the Śāstras have ordained marriage, and the

Somayāga and the Sautrāmaṇi-yajña respectively for them; but even with reference to these matters, the most excellent course is Renunciation (nivṛtti), that is to say, 'Desireless Action'. Although the word 'nivṛtti', when used in relation to fifth-case-ended nouns, means, 'renunciation of a particular thing' or 'giving up a particular Action altogether'; yet, as the adjective 'nivṛtta' is in the Karma-Yoga applied to the noun 'karma', the word 'nivṛtta-karma', it must be borne in mind, means 'Action which is to be performed desirelessly'; and the

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word has been used clearly in those meanings in the Manu-Smṛti and in the Bhāgavata-purāṇa (Manu. 12. 89; Bhāg. 11.10.1 and 7.15.47). In speaking about anger (krodha) Bhāravika says in the Kirāta-kāvya (1.33) that:

amarṣaśūnyena janasya jantunā na jātahārdena na  
vidviṣādarah ॥

i.e., "if a man does not get angry or annoyed when he has been insulted, it is just the same whether he is your friend or whether he hates you!" Vidulā has said, that from the point of view of the warrior (kṣatriya) religion:

etāvān eva puruṣo yad amarṣī yad akṣamī ॥  
kṣamāvān niramarṣaś ca naiva strī na punaḥ pumān ॥

(Ma. Bhā. U. 132.33).

i.e., "he who gets angry (on account of injustice) and who does not submit (to insult), is truly a man. He who does not get angry or annoyed is neither a woman nor a man". It has already been stated above that in order that the world should go on, there must not be either anger or valour at all times, or forgiveness at all times. The same law applies to avarice (lobha); because, even if a man is a saṁnyāsi (ascetic) yet he wants Release (mokṣa).

Vyāsa has stated in various stories in the Mahābhārata, that the various virtues of valour, courage, kindness, probity, friendship, impartiality etc., are, in addition to their mutual oppositions, also limited by considerations of time and place. Whatever the virtue may be, it is not equally appropriate in all circumstances. Bhartṛhari says that:

vipadi dhairyam athābhyudaye kṣamā sadasi vākpaṭutā  
yudhi vikramaḥ | (Nīti. 63).

that is: "Courage is a virtue in days of misfortune, forgiveness in days of power (that is, notwithstanding that you are in a position to punish), oratory in an assembly, and valour in warfare". In times of peace, there are not wanting mere talkers like Uttara; but although there may be many Hambirarāos who are courageous enough to shoot arrows through the nose-rings of their wives, it is only one of them who acquits



himself with credit as an archer on the battle-field! Not only are courage and the other above-mentioned virtues really appropriate in the respective circumstances mentioned, but they cannot even be properly tested except in such circumstances. There are not wanting shoals of school-friends; but, "nikaṣagrāvā tu teṣāṁ vipat", i.e. "adversity is their touchstone". Misfortune is the true test for trying them. The word 'circumstances' above includes considerations of worthiness and unworthiness, in addition to considerations of time and place. No virtue is greater than impartiality. The Bhagavadgītā itself clearly says that being: "samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu", i.e., "impartial towards all created things", is a characteristic feature of a perfect being (siddha). But, what does this impartiality mean? If somebody showers charity on each and every one alike, that is to say, without considering their respective merits, shall we call him a wise man or a fool? This question has been answered in the Gītā itself in the following words: "deśe kāle ca pātre ca tad dānaṁ sāttvika viduḥ", i.e., "that charity which. is made with proper regard for the place, the time, and the worthiness (of the party) is the pure (sāttvika) charity" (Gī. 17.20). Considerations of time are not limited to the present time. As times change, so also changes take place in the laws relating to worldly life; and therefore, if one has to consider the propriety or otherwise of anything pertaining to ancient times, one has necessarily to

consider also the ideas of righteousness or unrighteousness prevailing at that time. Manu (1.85) and Vyāsa (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 359.8) say:

anye kṛtayuge dharmās tretāyām dvāpare 'pare |

anye kaliyuge nṛṇām yugahrāsānurūpataḥ ||

i.e., "the laws relating to the Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and the Kali-yuga are all different according as the yugas (eras) change". And it is stated in the Mahābhārata itself that in ancient times, women were not restricted by marriage, and they were entirely independent and unchecked in that matter; but, when the evil effects of this kind of life manifested themselves later on, Śvetaketu laid down the limitation of marriage (Ma. Bhā. Ā. 122); and Śukrācārya was the first one to promulgate the prohibition against drink (Ma. Bhā. Ā. 76). Needless to say,

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there must be different standards for considering the laws pertaining to the times when these restrictions were not in vogue, than those relating to the times when they came into vogue; and in the same way, if the laws which are in force in the present age are changed in the future, then the consideration of the righteousness or unrighteousness of actions in the future will also be on a different basis. As there are considerations of time, so also are there considerations of

the customs of the country, the customs of the family, as also the customs of the community; for, custom is the root of all religion. Nevertheless, there are inconsistencies even among customs. Bhīṣma has described the differences between customs in the following words:

na hi sarvahiṭaḥ kaścid ācāraḥ sampravartate ।

tenaivānyaḥ prabhavaty so 'paraṁ bādhate punaḥ ॥

(Śān. 259. 17.18).

that is: "One cannot find any custom, which is beneficial to everybody, at all times. If you take one custom, another one is better, and if you accept the second custom, it is again contrary to a third one"; and he has said that we have to discriminate between customs and customs.

If I go on solving in this way all the riddles about what should be done and what should not be done (karmākarma) and what is righteous and what unrighteous (dharmādharmā), I shall have to write a second Mahābhārata myself. I have laboured on this subject so long only with the idea of impressing on the mind of my readers how the circumstances in which Arjuna found himself in the beginning of the Gītā as a result of a conflict between fraternal affection and a warrior's duties were not something out of the common; and how similar circumstances very often befall great and responsible persons in life, giving rise sometimes to a conflict between the principles of Harmlessness and Self-protection, or of Veracity

and general welfare, or between the protection of one's person and one's imputation, or again between different duties arising out of different aspects of the same situation; and how, many exceptions thus arise, which are not provided for by ordinary and generally accepted moral laws; and lastly, how on such

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occasions, not only ordinary, but even very clever and learned persons, naturally feel the desire of finding out whether or not there is some definite formula or basis for determining what should be done and what not, or, what is one's duty and what is not one's duty. It is true that some concessions have been made in the Śāstras to meet calamities like a famine which are technically known as 'āpaddharma'. For instance, the writers of the Smṛtis say that in such calamities (āpatkāla) a Brahmin incurs no sin, if he takes food in any place; and in the Chāndogyopaniṣad, there is even a story of Uṣasticākṛāyaṇa having done so. (Yājñña. 3.41; Chān. 1.10). But there is a world of difference between those circumstances and the circumstance mentioned above. In the case of famine, there is a conflict between religious principles on the one hand and hunger, thirst, and other bodily needs on the other, and the bodily organs drag you in one direction and religious principles in the opposite direction. But in many of the circumstances mentioned above, the conflict is not between bodily impulses

and religious principles but there is an inter-conflict between two principles laid down in the Śāstras themselves and it becomes necessary to consider minutely whether to follow this religious precept or that; and though it may be possible for person? of ordinary intelligence to arrive at a decision on a few such occasions by considering what pure-minded persons have done in the past in similar circumstances, yet on other occasions, even sages are puzzled; because, the more one thinks about a particular matter, more and more of doubts and counter-arguments come into existence, and it becomes very difficult to arrive at a definite conclusion; and if a proper decision is not arrived at, there is a risk of one's committing an unlawful thing or even a crime. Considering the matter from this point of view, it will be seen that the discrimination between the lawful and the unlawful or between the doable and the not-doable becomes an independent science by itself, which is even more difficult than the sciences of logic or grammar. In old Sanskrit treatises, the word 'nīti-śāstra' (Ethics) used to be applied principally to regal jurisprudence (rāja-nīti) and the doable and the not-doable used to be technically called 'dharma-śāstra'. But as

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the word 'nīti' includes both duty and good conduct, I have in this book referred to the discussion of the questions of righteousness and unrighteousness or of what ought to be

done and what ought not be done, by the name 'nīti-śāstra'. In order to show that this science, which expounds Ethics, or shows what is doable and what is not-doable, or what is righteous and what unrighteous, is indeed a very difficult science, the sentence "sūkṣmā gatiḥ hi dharmasya", i.e. "the true nature of righteousness, that is to say, of the Ethics of worldly life, is very subtle", occurs several times in the Mahābhārata. It is extremely difficult to satisfactorily answer such questions as:— How did five Pāṇḍavas marry one Draupadi? or, Why did Bhīṣma, Droṇa and others sit quiet, as if with a dead heart, when attempts were made to denude Draupadi?, or, Whether the principle; "arthasya puruṣo dāsaḥ dāsaḥ tv artho na kasyacit" i.e., "man is the servant of wealth (artha), wealth is the servant of nobody" (Ma. Bhā. Bhī. 43.35), enunciated by Bhīṣma and Droṇa, in justification of their having sided with the wicked Duryodhana in the civil war is or is not correct? or, if service is looked upon as dog-like, as is shown by the words: "sevā śvavṛttir ākhyātā", i.e., "servitude is said to be the tendency of a dog" (Manu. 406) and is accordingly considered eschewable, then why did Bhīṣma and others not give up the service of Duryodhana, rather than becoming the slaves of wealth? Because, on such occasions different persons arrive at different inferences or decisions according to different circumstances. Not only are the principles of justice extremely subtle ("sūkṣmā gatiḥ hi dharmasya ", Ma. Bhā. Anu. 10.70), but, as is stated later on in the Mahābhārata itself, there are numerous branches to those

principles and the inferences which can be drawn from them are numerous ("bahuśākhā hy anantikā", Ma. Bhā. Vana. 208.2). Tulādhāra also, where he is discoursing on questions of morality, in the Tulādhāra-Jājali conversation, says': "sūkṣmatvān na sa vijñāturṁ śakyate bahunihnavāḥ", i.e., "as morality is subtle and complicated, one very often does not know what it is" (Śān. 261.37). The writer of the Mahābhārata was fully conversant with these subtle occasions, and he has

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collected together different traditional stories in the Mahābhārata in order to explain how great men behaved in the past in those circumstances. But it was necessary to scientifically examine all these subjects and to enunciate the universal principle underlying them, in a religious work like the Mahābhārata. Vyāsa has explained this underlying principle in the Bhagavadgītā, taking his stand on the advice given in the past by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna on the pretext of removing his doubts about his duty; and, therefore, the Gītā has become the mystic Upaniṣad and the crown jewel of the Mahābhārata, and the Mahābhārata has become an illustrated and detailed lecture on the fundamental principles of Right Action (Karma-Yoga) which have been enunciated in the Gītā. I have to suggest to those who imagine that the Gītā has been subsequently interpolated into the Mahābhārata that they should pay close attention to this fact. Nay, the uniqueness

and special feature of the Gītā consists in this very thing. Because, although there are numerous treatises like the Upaniṣads etc. which deal with the pure science of Release (mokṣa) that is, with Vedānta, or like the Smṛtis which merely enunciate rules of righteous conduct such as Harmlessness etc., yet there is not to be found, at least in these days, another ancient work in the Sanskrit literature like the Gītā which, discriminates between the doable and the not-doable (kāryākārya-vyavasthiti) on the authority of the extremely recondite philosophy of the Vedānta. Devotees of the Gītā need not be told that the word 'kāryākārya-vyavasthiti' has not been coined by me, but is from the Gītā itself (Gītā. 16. 24). In the Yogavāsiṣṭha, Vāsiṣṭha has ultimately preached to Śrī Rāma, the path of Energism (Karma-Yoga) based on Self-Realisation (jñāna), as has been done in the Gītā; but such works, which have been written after the date of the Gītā, and which are only imitations of it, do not in any way detract from the uniqueness of the Gītā, to which I have referred above.

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# CHAPTER III.

## THE SCIENCE OF RIGHT ACTION

### (KARMA-YOGA-ŚĀSTRA)

tasmād yogāya yujyasva yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam । [1]

~ Gītā (2.50 )

If a man is not actuated by the desire of acquiring the knowledge of a particular science, he is unfit to study that science, and explaining such a science to such an unfit person is like pouring water on an obverse vessel. Not only is the disciple not benefited by it, but even the preceptor wastes his labour, and both waste their time. Therefore, the aphorisms "athāto dharmajijñāsā" and " athāto brahmajijñāsā " appear at the beginning of both the Jaiminī and the Bādarāyaṇa-Sūtras. Just as the teaching of the Brahman is best imparted to a 'mumukṣu' (one who is desirous of Release) or as the teaching of Law or justice is best imparted to one who seeks that

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[1] "Therefore, take shelter in the Yoga, 'Yoga' is the name given to the skill, the wisdom or the gracefulness of performing Action (Karma)": such is the definition or connotation of the term 'Yoga', which has been more fully dealt with later on in this chapter.

knowledge, so also is the teaching of the Science of Right Action (Karma) most properly given to the person who has been inspired with the 'jijñāsā' (desire of knowing) how to rightly perform Action while leading a worldly life; and that is why I have disposed of the 'athāto' in the first chapter and have outlined the nature of 'karmajijñāsā' and the importance of the science of Karma-Yoga in the second chapter. Unless a man has by experience found where his difficulty lies, he does not realise the importance of the science of getting over that difficulty; and if this importance is not realised, a science which has been learnt merely by rote, is later on found difficult to remember. Therefore, good teachers first ascertain whether or not the disciple has been inspired with, desire for the knowledge, and if there is no such inspiration, they attempt to rouse the desire. The Science of Right Action (Karma-Yoga) has been expounded in the Gītā on this

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basis. When, being beset with the doubt whether or not he should take part in a war in which he would be responsible for the slaughter of ancestors and preceptors and also of all kings and brethren, Arjuna was inspired by the desire to give up the war and renounce the world, and when he was not satisfied by the ordinary arguments that abandoning a duty which had befallen him was a foolish and weak act and that by doing so, far from obtaining heaven he would on the other hand, suffer

disgrace, Śrī Kṛṣṇa preached to him the science of Karma-Yoga, after in the first instance seeming to ridicule him by saying: "aśocyān anvaśocas tvaṁ prajñāvādaṁś ca bhāṣase" i.e., "you lament those for whom you ought not to lament and at the same time, tell me big tales about the knowledge of the Brahman". I have shown in the last chapter that the doubt by which Arjuna had been beset, was not groundless, and that even great sages are in certain circumstances, puzzled as to 'what to do and what not to do'. But the starting advice of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna is: that it is not proper to give up Action (karma) on the ground that numerous difficulties arise in the consideration of what should be done and what should not be done; that, a wise man should practise such a 'yoga' or device whereby instead of Actions being done away with in the world, one will only escape their evil effects or binding force, and that: "tasmād yogāya yujyasva" i.e., "therefore, you, should do the same". This 'Yoga' is the science of 'KARMA-YOGA'; and in as much as, the circumstances in which Arjuna found himself were not unique, but every one of us comes across small or big difficulties of the same nature in worldly life, it is necessary that we should all profit by the exposition of this Karma-Yoga science which has been made in the Bhagavadgītā. But whichever science is taken, it is necessary to properly define the important words occurring in its exposition so that their meanings are properly understood, and to first precisely explain the fundamental outline of the exposition of that science; otherwise, many misunderstandings or difficulties

subsequently arise. Therefore, following this usual practice, I shall first examine and explain the meanings of some of the important words which occur in this science.

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The first of these words is 'KARMA'. The word 'karma' comes from the root 'kr', and means 'doing', 'affairs', or 'activity'; and that same ordinary meaning is intended in the Bhagavadgītā. My only reason for explaining this is, that the reader should not be confused by the limited and restricted meanings in which this word has been used in the Mīmāṃsā philosophy or in other places. Whichever religion is taken, it prescribes some Action or other for reaching the Īśvara. According to the ancient Vedic religion, this Action was sacrificial ritual; and the Pūrva-vyavasāyātmikā of Jaiminī has been written with the sole purpose of showing how the various different and sometimes apparently contradictory statements which are to be found in the Vedic treatises regarding the performance of this sacrificial ritual can be reconciled with each other. According to Jaiminī, the performance of this Vedic or Śrauta (prescribed by the Śruti) sacrificial ritual was the principal and the ancient religion. Whatever a man does, must be taken to have been done by him for the purpose of the 'yajña' (sacrifice). If he earns money, he must earn it for the sake of the yajña; and if he collects grain, that also must be understood to have been done for the yajña (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 26.

25). In as much as the Vedas themselves have enjoined the performance of the yajñas, any Action done for the purpose of the yajña cannot of itself be a source of bondage to man; it is a means for the yajña and not an independent object; and therefore, the effect of that Action is included in the result to be achieved by the yajña; it has no independent effect. But although these Actions, which are performed for the purpose of the yajña, may not have an independent effect, yet the yajña itself leads to heaven (which, according to the Mīmāṃsā school, is a kind of happiness), and the performer of the yajña performs it willingly, only in order to attain heaven. Therefore, the performance (karma) of the yajña itself falls into the category of 'puruṣārtha' (something which a man desires). Any particular thing which a man likes and which he desires to attain is called 'puruṣārtha' (Jai. Sū. 4.1.1 and 2). 'Kratu' is a synonym for 'yajña' and therefore, the word 'kratvartha' is also used in place of the word 'yajñārtha' and therefore, all Actions fall into the two divisions of 'yajñārtha' ('kratvartha')

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that is, Actions which do not give any independent fruit or benefit and are, therefore, non-binding, and 'puruṣārtha' that is, Actions performed for the benefit of the doer and, therefore, binding. The Saṁhitās and the Brāhmaṇas contain nothing else but a description of sacrificial ritual. It is true that in the Ṛg-Veda-saṁhitā there are verses (sūkta) in praise of

Indra and the other gods; but as these are to be used only at the time of the yajña, the Mīmāṃsā writers say that all Śruti treatises preach only the yajña and other sacrificial ritual. These orthodox ritual-masters, and pure karma-vādins say that heaven can be attained only by performing the sacrificial ritual prescribed by the Vedas and not otherwise; and that, that is so, whether you perform the yajñas ignorantly or after Realising the Brahman. Although this sacrificial ritual is accepted by the Upaniṣads, yet their worth is declared to be lower than that of the Knowledge of the Brahman, and the Upaniṣads say that though heaven may be attained by the yajñas, Realisation of the Brahman (brahma-jñāna) is necessary for attaining the true Release. The desire-prompted Actions in the shape of sacrificial ritual, described in the second chapter of the Bhagavadgītā by the words "vedavādaratāḥ Pārtha nānyad astīti vādinaḥ" (Gī. 2.42) are the above-mentioned sacrificial ritual, performed without having realised the Brahman. In the same way, the sentence "yajñārthāt karmaṇonyatra loko 'yaṁ karmabandhanaḥ" i.e., "Actions performed for the purpose of the yajña, do not create bondage; all other Actions have a binding force" (Gī. 3.9) is only a repetition of the opinion of the Mīmāṃsā school. Besides this sacrificial ritual, (being the Actions prescribed by the Vedas and the Śrutis), there are other Actions, necessary from the point of view of religion, which have been prescribed by the Manu-Smṛti and other religious treatises, having regard to the division of society into the four castes. For instance,

fighting has been prescribed for the warrior (kṣatriya), trade for the merchant (vaiśya) etc.; and, as these have been for the first time systematically prescribed in the Smṛti writings, they are referred to as 'Smārta' (prescribed by the Smṛtis) Actions or yajñas. There are besides these Actions prescribed by the Śrutis and the Smṛtis, other religious Actions, e.g., fasting, austerities etc., which have

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for the first time been described in detail in the Purāṇas, and these may, therefore, be described as 'paurāṇika karma' (Actions). All these Actions are again sub-divided into everyday (nitya), occasional (naimittika), and for-a-particular-purpose (kāmya) Actions. Such Actions as must be performed every day, such as bathing and offering prayers at twilight, are called nitya-karma. By performing these, no special purpose (artha-siddhi) is achieved; but if they are not performed, one incurs sin. Naimittika (occasional) Actions are such as have to be performed because some occasion necessitating them has arisen, such as, the pacification of inauspicious stars, penances etc. If that occasion for which we perform this pacification or penance had not come into existence, there would be no necessity for performing this Action. In addition to these, there are certain other Actions which we very often perform because we desire a particular thing and for acquiring that thing, as enjoined by the Śāstras. These Actions are kāmya

(desire-prompted) actions; e.g., sacrificial ritual for causing rain or for obtaining a son. In addition to these every day, occasional, and desire-prompted Actions, there are other Actions such as, drinking etc. which have been pronounced to be totally objectionable by the Śāstras and therefore, they are named niṣiddha (objectionable) actions. Which Actions are everyday Actions, which occasional, which desire-prompted and which objectionable has been laid down by our religious treatises; and if any parson versed in religion is asked whether a particular act performed by a particular person is sinful or virtuous, he will consider whether that particular Action is yajñārtha or puruṣārtha or nitya or naimittika or kāmya or niṣiddha according to the directions of the Śāstras and give his opinion accordingly. The view-point of the Bhagavadgītā is more exhaustive than this or may even be said to be beyond this. It may be that a particular Action has not been pronounced as objectionable by the Śāstras; nay, it may even have been prescribed as proper, e.g., in the case in point, the warrior-religion was the 'prescribed ' (vihita) thing for Arjuna; but on that account, it does not follow that one should always perform that Action, nor also that it will always be certainly beneficial; and the injunctions of the Śāstras are very often mutually



contradictory, as has been shown in the previous chapter. The subject-matter of the Gītā is to show whether or not there are any means for ascertaining what course should be followed by a person on such an occasion and if so, what those means are. It is not necessary for the purpose of this exposition to pay any special attention to the divisions of 'karma' mentioned above. In order to explain to what extent the doctrines laid down by the vyavasāyātmikā school regarding the sacrificial ritual etc. prescribed by the Vedas or the other duties prescribed for the four castes are consistent with the Karma-Yoga advocated in the Gītā, their theories have been examined in the Gītā as occasion arose; and in the last chapter, the question whether or not a Self-Realised (jñānin) man should perform sacrificial ritual has been precisely answered (Gī. 18.6). But in as much as the principal subject-matter of the Gītā is more exhaustive than this, the word 'Karma' as used in the exposition made in the Gītā must not be taken in the restricted meaning of Actions prescribed by the Śrutis or the Smṛtis, but in a more comprehensive meaning. In short, all the Actions which a man performs, e.g., eating, drinking, playing, sitting, rising, residing, breathing, smiling, weeping, smelling, seeing, speaking, hearing, walking, giving, taking, sleeping, waking, killing, fighting, meditating or contemplating, commanding, or objecting, giving, performing sacrificial ritual, agriculture or commerce, desiring, deciding, keeping quiet, etc., etc., etc., are all included in the word 'Karma' as used in the Bhagavadgītā, whether those Actions are bodily (kāyika) or

vocal (vācika) or mental (mānasika) (Gītā 5.8 – 9). In short, even the remaining alive or the dying of the body itself, are Actions, and as occasion arises, it becomes necessary to consider which of the two actions of 'remaining alive' or 'dying' is to be chosen. When this consideration arises, the word 'karma' (Action) can also be understood in the meaning of Duty (kartavya-karma) or proper action (vihita-karma) (Gī. 4.16). We have so far considered the actions of human beings. Going beyond this, the word 'karma' is also applied to the activities of the moveable and immoveable world, 'that is to say, even of lifeless things. But that matter will be considered in the subsequent chapter on Cause and Effect (karma-vipāka-prakriyā).

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The word "YOGA" is even more complicated in its meaning than the word 'karma'. The present-day ordinary meaning of this word is 'controlling the mental impulses of the organs by means of prāṇāyāma, i.e., 'control of the breath' or 'the Yoga of mental absorption or meditation prescribed by the Pātañjala-Sūtras ', and the word has been used in the same meanings also in the Upaniṣads (Kaṭha. 6.11). But it must first be borne in mind that this restricted meaning is not the meaning in which it has been used in the Bhagavadgītā. The word 'Yoga' comes from the root 'yuj' which means 'to join', and its root meaning is 'the state of union', 'combination',

'addition' or 'co-existence' or 'staying together', and later on, it has also come to mean the 'means', 'device' or 'method' or 'thing to be done', that is, the 'Karma' (Action) which is necessary for acquiring that state, and the Amarakośa has given all these meanings of the word in the following sentence: "yogaḥ saṁnahanopāya-dhyāna-saṁgati-yuktiṣu" (3.3.22). In practical astrology, if some planets have become propitious or unpropitious, we say that they are forming a propitious or unpropitious 'yoga', and the word 'yoga' in the phrase 'yoga-kṣema' means 'acquiring such things as one has not got' (Gī. 9.22). On seeing that Droṇācārya would not be vanquished in the Bhārata war, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has, in the following words said that: "there was only one 'yoga' (means or 'trick') for vanquishing him":— "eko hi yogo 'sya bhaved vadhāya", i.e., "he can be killed only by one trick" (Ma. Bhā. Dro. 181.31) and later on He has narrated how He had killed Jarāsaṁdha and other kings for the protection of the Religion by means of 'yoga'. It is stated in the Udyoga parva that after Bhīṣma had taken away the damsels Ambā, Ambikā and Ambālikā, the other kings pursued him crying: "Yoga, Yoga" (U. 172), and the word 'yoga' has been used in the same meaning in numerous other places in the Mahābhārata. In the Gītā, the words 'yoga', 'yogī' or other compounds from the word 'yoga' have occurred about 80 times. But nowhere except in at most four or five places has it been used in the meaning of 'Pātañjala-yoga' (Gī. 6.12 and 23). "We find almost everywhere the word used more or less in the meaning of 'means', 'skilful device,'

'method', 'the thing to be done', 'union', etc., and it must be said that this is one of the

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comprehensive words used in the Gītā-science. Still, it is not enough even to say in a general way that 'yoga' means 'means', 'skilful device' or 'method'. Because, according as the speaker may wish, it may be a means of Renunciation (saṁnyāsa) or Action (karma) or mental control (citta-nirodha) or of Release (Mokṣa) or of something else. For instance, the word 'yoga' has been used in the Gītā itself, in three or four places, to signify the divine skill or wonderful power of the Blessed Lord in creating the variegated perceptible creation (Gī. 7.25; 9.5; 10.7; 11.8) and on that account, the Blessed Lord has been referred to as 'Yogeśvara' (Gī. 18.75). But this is not the principal meaning of the word 'yoga' in the Gītā. Therefore, in order to explain what particular skill, means, method or process is principally signified in the Gītā by the use of the word 'yoga', this word has intentionally been clearly defined in the Gītā itself as: "yogaḥ karmesu kauśalam" (Gī. 2.50) i.e. " 'yoga' means some special skill, device, intelligent method, or graceful way of performing Actions"; and in the Śāṅkara-bhāṣya on this phrase, the phrase 'karmesu kauśalam has been interpreted as meaning: "the device of eliminating the natural tendency of karma to create a bondage". Normally, there are numerous 'yoga or means of performing one and the same

action, but the best of all these methods is specially referred to as 'yoga'. For instance, the earning of money can be achieved by theft or deceit or by begging or by service or by borrowing or by physical labour, and many other such ways; and although the word 'yoga' can be applied to each of these ways, according to the root meaning of the word, yet, 'earning money by one's own labour without sacrificing one's independence' is principally referred to as "the yoga of acquiring wealth" (dravya-prāpti-yoga).

If the Blessed Lord Himself has intentionally and specifically defined the word 'yoga' in the Gītā itself as: "yogaḥ karmesu kauśalam" i.e., "'Yoga' means a special device of performing Actions", then, there should strictly speaking remain no doubt whatsoever about the primary meaning of this word in the Gītā. But, as several commentators have extracted various hidden meanings from the Gītā by twisting the meaning of this word, disregarding this definition of the

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word given by the Blessed Lord Himself, it is necessary here to go deeper into the meaning of the word 'yoga' in order to clear that mis-interpretation. The word 'yoga' appears for the first time in the second chapter of the Gītā and at that very place the meaning of that word is explained. After having justified

the war on the authority of the Sāṃkhya philosophy, the Blessed Lord goes on to say that He will next give Arjuna the justification of the war on the authority of the Yoga (Gī. 2.39), and He, to begin with, describes how the minds of persons continually engrossed in desire-prompted Action like sacrificial ritual, become disintegrated on account of the desire for the reward (Gī. 2.41 – 46). He then goes on to say that Arjuna should not allow his mind to be disintegrated in this way, and should "give up all attachments (āśakti), but not think of giving up Action", and He has further said to him: "become steeped in the yoga (yogastha) and perform Actions" (Gī. 2.48) and in the same place the word 'yoga' has been to begin with clearly defined as meaning: "'Yoga' means equability of mind towards success or failure". Then, He goes on to say: "this 'yoga' of equability of mind is better than performing Actions with the desire for the fruit" (Gī. 2.49) and that "when the mind is equable, the doer is not affected by the sin or the virtue of the Action, and, therefore, acquire this Yoga". Immediately thereafter, He again defines the nature of 'Yoga' by the words: "yogaḥ karmesu kauśalam" (Gī. 2. 50). From this, it becomes clear that the special device mentioned to start with by the Blessed Lord for the sinless performance of Actions, namely an equable mind, is what is known as "kauśala" (skilful device) and that performing Actions by this 'kauśala' or device is, in the Gītā, known as 'yoga'; and this very meaning of that word has further been made perfectly clear by Arjuna who says: "yo 'yaṁ yogas tvayā proktaḥ sāmyena Madhusūdana" (Gī. 6.33),

i.e., "this yoga of equality, that is, of an equable frame of mind which has been prescribed by you to me". There are two ways in which the Self-Realised man should live in this world which have been prescribed by the Vedic religion in existence long before the date of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. One of these ways is the literal abandonment (saṁnyāsa) or giving up (tyāga) of all Action after Self -Realisation, and the

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other way is of not giving up Actions even after Self-Realisation, but going on performing them while life lasts, in such a way that one does not thereby incur either sin or merit. It is with reference to these two paths that the words 'saṁnyāsa' and 'karma-yoga' have been used later on in the Gītā (Gī. 5.2). 'saṁnyāsa' means 'give up' and 'yoga' means 'stick to'; therefore, these are two independent paths of the giving up or the sticking to Action. The two words 'sāṁkhya' and 'yoga' (Sāṁkhya-yoga) are two abbreviated terms, which are used later on with reference to these two paths (Gī. 5.4). It is true that the sixth chapter of the Gītā contains a description of the postures (āsanās) of the Pātañjala-yoga necessary for steadying the mind; but for whom has that description been given? Not for the ascetic, but for the Karma-Yogi, i.e., for the person who continues skillfully performing Actions, and, in order that he might thereby acquire an equable frame of mind. Otherwise, the sentence "tapasvibhyo 'dhiko yogī", i.e., "the

yogi is superior to the ascetic" is meaningless. Also, the advice given to Arjuna at the end of this chapter in the terms "tasmād yogī bhavārjuna" (6.46), i.e., "therefore, O Arjuna, become a yogi", does not mean "take to the practice of Pātañjala-Yoga" but has to be taken as meaning "become a yogi, who performs Actions skillfully or a Karma-Yogi", in which meaning that word has been used in the phrases: "yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi" (2.48) i.e., "perform Action, having become a yogi", or after that: "tasmād yogāya yujyasva yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam" (Gī. 2. 50), i.e., "therefore, take shelter in yoga; 'yoga' means the skill of performing Action", or at the end of the fourth chapter, "yogam ātiṣṭhottiṣṭha Bhārata" (4. 42), i.e., "take shelter in the yoga, O, Bhārata, and stand up". Because, His saying "follow the Pātañjala-yoga and stand up and fight" would be impossible and even improbable. It has been clearly stated previously that: "karmayogena yoginām" (Gī. 3.3) i.e., "yogis are persons who perform Actions"; and in the exposition of the Nārāyaṇīya or the Bhāgavata religion in the Mahābhārata, it is stated that persons belonging to that religion 'do not abandon worldly affairs but perform them skillfully ("suprayuktena karmaṇā") and attain the Parameśvara (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 34S. 56). From

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this it follows, that the words 'yogi' and 'karma-yogi' have been used synonymously in the Gītā, and that they mean: "a person



who performs Action according to a particular device." Yet, instead of using the long word 'karma-yoga', its abbreviated form 'yoga' has been more frequently used both in the Gītā and in the Mahābhārata. The word 'yoga', which has been used by the Blessed Lord three times in succession in the stanza: "this yoga which I have explained to you had been taught by me before to Vivasvān (Gī. 4.1); Vivasvān taught it to Manu, but as this yoga subsequently ceased to exist, I had once more to-day to explain that yoga to you", has not been intended to mean the Pātañjala-yoga; and one has to understand it as meaning "a particular kind of device, method, or process of performing Action". In the same way, the reference by Sañjaya to the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna as 'yoga' (Gī. 18.75) means the same thing. Although Śrī Śaṁkarācārya himself followed the path of Renunciation, yet he has in the beginning of his Gītā-bhāṣya pointed out the two divisions of the Vedic Religion into 'pravṛtti' and 'nivṛtti' and the word 'yoga' has been interpreted by him in some places. according to the definition given by the Blessed Lord as; "samyag darśanopāya karmānuṣṭhānam" (Gī. Bhā. 4.42) and in other places as "yogaḥ yuktiḥ" (Gī. Bhā. 17. 7). In the same way also in the Mahābhārata, these two words have been clearly defined in the Anugītā in the phrase "pravṛtti lakṣaṇo yogaḥ jñānaṁ saṁnyāsa lakṣaṇam" i.e., "yoga means the path of Energism (pravṛtti-mārga) and jñāna means the path of Renunciation (saṁnyāsa or nivṛtti-mārga) (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 43. 25) and even

in the Nārāyaṇīyopākhyāna at the end of the Śāntiparva the words 'sāṃkhya' and 'yoga' have occurred on numerous occasions in these two senses, and it is explained how and why these two paths were created by the Blessed Lord in the beginning of the creation itself (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 240 and 348). That this Nārāyaṇīya or Bhāgavata religion has been propounded in the Bhagavadgītā will become perfectly clear from the quotation from the Mahābhārata which has been given at the beginning of the first chapter. Therefore, one has to say that the meanings of 'sāṃkhya' as 'nivṛtti' and of 'yoga' as 'pravṛtti', which are their ancient technical meanings according

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to the Nārāyaṇīya religion, are also their meanings in the Gītā; and, if anybody has any doubts about this, these doubts, ought to be fully cleared by the definition of that word given in the Gītā as: "samatvaṃ yoga uccyate", i.e., " 'yoga' is the name given to equability" or "yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam", i.e., "'yoga' means skill in Action," as also by such phrases used in the Gītā as " karma-yogeṇa yoginām" etc.; and, it is established beyond argument that the word 'yoga' has been used in the Gītā in the sense of only the path of Energism (pravṛtti-mārga) i.e., the "KARMA-YOGA". Not only in the Vedic religious treatises, but also in the Buddhistic religious treatises in Pali and in Sanskrit, the word Yoga is found to have been used in this meaning. For instance, in the Pali work, named Milindapaśna written about

Śaka 200, we come across the word. "Pubba-yoga (pūrva-yoga)" where its meaning has been defined, as "pubbakamma" (pūrva-karma) (Mi. Pra. 1.4); and in the 50th. verse of the first canto (sarga) of the Sanskrit poem Buddhacarita written by the poet Āśvaghoṣa in the beginning of the- Śālivāhana era, we find the following statement:— "ācāryakaṁ yogavidhau dvijānām-aprāptim-anyair-janako jagāma " i.e., "The king Janaka had become an ācārya (preacher) for teaching the Yoga methods (yoga-vidhi) to Brahmins, and such a, preceptorship had not been acquired by any one before him." In this place, the word 'yoga-vidhi' has to be interpreted as meaning "the method (vidhi) of the Desire-less Karma-Yoga". Because, the Gītā, and all the other works emphatically say that that was the true bearing of the mode of life of Janaka and Āśvaghoṣa has in the Buddhacarita (9.19 – 20) given the illustration of Janaka himself in order to show "how Release can be obtained notwithstanding that one leads the life of a house-holder". When it has been in this way proved that even according to the Buddhistic treatises, this path of Action, prescribed by Janaka was known as 'yoga', one has to understand the word 'yoga' used in the Gītā also in the same meaning; because, the Gītā itself says that the path prescribed by Janaka is the very path it advocates (Gī. 3.20). We will later on consider in greater detail the two paths of 'Sāṁkhya' and 'Yoga'. The matter under consideration at present is in what meaning the word 'yoga' has been used in the Gītā.

When the principal meanings of the words 'yoga', namely, 'Karma-Yoga', and 'yogi', namely 'Karma-Yogi', have in this way been established, it is not necessary to say in so many words what the subject-matter of the Bhagavadgītā is. The Blessed Lord Himself refers to the advice given by Him as 'yoga' (Gī. 4.1 – 3). Not only that, but as I have already stated above, Arjuna in the sixth chapter (Gī. 6.33), and Sañjaya in the conclusion (upasañhāra) at the end of the Gītā (Gī. 18.75) have characterised the preaching of the Gītā as 'yoga'. In the same way, in the enunciatory words used at the end of each chapter of the Gītā signifying the conclusion of the chapter (which is technically called saṁkalpa), it is clearly stated that the Science of Yoga (yoga-śāstra) is the subject-matter of the Gītā; but none of the commentators on the Gītā, seem to have paid any attention to this meaning of the word in the saṁkalpa. After the two opening words "Śrīmad-Bhagavadgītāsu upaniṣatsu" in this saṁkalpa, come the two words "brahma-vidyāyām yoga-śāstre" '. Out of these, the first two words mean "in the Upaniṣat sung by the Blessed Lord" and it is quite clear from the following two words that "the Yoga-Śāstra which is one of the Brahma-Vidyās", that is, the, is the subject matter of the Gītā. 'Brahma-vidyā' means 'Knowledge of the Brahman' (Brahmajñāna); and when that has been acquired, the Self-Released man has two cults or paths open before him (Gī. 3.3). One is the Sāṁkhya path or

the saṁnyāsa (Renunciation) path, that is, the path of abandoning all worldly affairs or Actions after Self-Realisation, and living like an apathetic (virakta) person; and the other path is the path of Yoga or of Karma-Yoga, that is to say, of not giving up worldly affairs but continuing to perform them in such a way that they do not create any difficulty in the matter of obtaining Release. Out of these two paths, the first one is also known as the 'path of Self-Realisation' (jñāna-niṣṭha) and an exposition of that will be found to have been made by many ṛṣis in the Upaniṣads and other writers. But there is no scientific exposition anywhere, except in the Gītā, of the Karma-Yoga, which is included in the Brahma-vidyā. Therefore, it now becomes quite clear that those persons who first

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prepared that saṁkalpa – and, as I have stated above, it must have been there before any of the commentaries on the Gītā were written, since it is to be found in all the editions of the Gītā – must have added the words "brahma-vidyāyām yoga-śāstre" in this saṁkalpa on proper authority, and intentionally, for emphasising the uniqueness of the subject-matter of the Gītā-śāstra, and not uselessly or frivolously; and at the same time, we also easily understand what the import of the Gītā was understood to be before any commentaries in support of particular cults came to be written on it. It is our great fortune that this work of preaching the Karma-Yoga was taken on his.

own shoulders by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhagavan, who was the promulgator of this path of Yoga and who was the personified 'Īśvara of all yogas' ('Yogeśvara' is 'yoga' plus 'Īśvara'), and who has explained the esoteric import of it to Arjuna for the benefit of the whole world. It is true that the words 'karma-yoga' and 'karma-yoga-śāstra' are longer than the words 'yoga' and 'yoga- śāstra' used in the Gītā; but in order that there should no more be any doubts as to what the Gītā preaches, I have intentionally given the name "Karma-Yoga-Śāstra" to this work and to this chapter.

That science by means of which we can decide such questions as: Which is the best and purest of the several 'yogas', means, or processes in which a particular Action can be performed; whether it can be always followed; if not, what are the exceptions to it, and how they arise; why is that path which we call good, really good, or that which we call bad, really bad, and on the strength of what, is this goodness or badness to be decided and who is to do so or what is the underlying principle in it etc. is known as the 'KARMA-YOGA-ŚĀSTRA' (science of Karma-Yoga) or, as expressed briefly in the Gītā 'YOGA-ŚĀSTRA' (the science of Yoga). 'Good' or 'bad' are words in ordinary use and the following other words: propitious and unpropitious, or beneficial and harmful, or meritorious and non-meritorious, or sin and virtue, or righteous and unrighteous, are used in the same sense. The same is the meaning conveyed by the word-couples doable and not-

doable (kārya and akārya), duty and non-duty (kartavya and akartavya), just and unjust (nyāyā and anyāyā).  
Nevertheless, as the various persons who have used these

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words have different ideas about the formation of the universe? there have also come into existence, different ways in which the 'Karma-Yoga' science has been expounded. Whatever science is taken, the subject-matter of it can be discussed ordinarily in three ways:— (1) considering the various objects in the physical world from the point of view that they really are as they are perceived by our organs, and that there is nothing- beyond, is the first of these methods, which is known as "ĀDHI-BHAUTIKA" (positive or materialistic) way of considering them. For instance, when you look upon the Sun not as a deity, but as a round-mass of gross matter made up of the five primordial elements, and examine its various properties, such as its heat, or light, or weight, or distance, or power of attraction, etc., that becomes the positive or material examination of the Sun. Take the tree as another illustration. If we do not consider the internal force in the tree which is responsible for its getting leaves etc., but consider the tree purely externally, that is, consider only the facts that when the seed is put into the earth, it takes root and becomes a sprout, which grows later on and goes through the visible changes of leaves, flowers, fruits etc., that is a purely material

examination of the tree. The examination of the subject-matter in Chemistry or Physics or the science of electricity or other modern sciences is of this kind. Nay, materialists imagine, that when they have examined in this way the visible properties of any object, that is all they need to do and that it is useless to further examine the objects in the world. (2)

When we discard this point of view, and examine what there is at the root of the object in the material world and whether the activities of these objects are due to some inherent properties in them or there is some other power or principle behind those activities, then one has to transcend the material, examination of the object. For instance, if we believe that in the gross or lifeless globe of the Sun, made up of the five primordial elements, there exists a deity called the 'Sun' which dwells within it, and that this deity carries on the activities of the material Sun, such examination is called an ĀDHI-DAIVIKA (Theological) examination of the object. According to this point of view, there are in the tree, water

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air, etc., innumerable deities, which are distinct from those objects, and which activate those objects. (3) But, when instead of believing in this way that there are millions and millions of independent deities in all the various objects in the gross world, we believe that there exists in this world some Spiritual Force, i.e., factor of consciousness (cicchakti)



imperceptible to the organs, which carries on all the activities of the external world; and that this Spiritual Force exists in the human body in the shape of an Ātman and acquaints the human being with the entire creation; and that this cosmos is kept going by that force, such consideration of the object is called an ĀDHYĀTMIKA (metaphysical) examination of the object. For instance, metaphysicians believe that the movements of the Sun and the Moon or even of the leaves of the tree are inspired by this unimaginable Power and that there are not different and independent deities in the Sun or in other objects. These three ways of examining any subject-matter have been in existence from times immemorial and they seem to have been followed even in the Upaniṣads. For instance, in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and other Upaniṣads, while considering whether the organs of perception (Jñānendriya) or the vital force (prāṇa) is superior, their respective strengths are considered, once from the point of view that they have deities like Agni etc., and again by considering their subtle (metaphysical i.e., ādhyātmika) forms (Br. 1.5.21 and 22; Chān. 1. 2 and 3; Kauṣī. 2. 8); and the consideration of the form of the Īśvara at the end of the seventh chapter and in the beginning of the eighth chapter of the Gītā is also from this point of view. Out of these three methods, our religious writers attach a higher importance to the metaphysical (ādhyātmika) method of consideration than to others, relying on the authority "ādhyātma-vidyā vidyānām" (Gī. 10.32) i.e., "the metaphysical science is the highest of all sciences". But in

modern times, the meanings of these three words are to a certain extent changed and the well-known French Materialist Comte [1] has given the highest importance

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to the Positive (material) exposition. He says that there is no sense in trying to find out the fundamental element, if any, which exists at the root of the world; and in as much as this element is always unknowable (agamyā) it is neither possible nor proper to found on it the edifice of a science. When the aboriginal man for the first time, saw trees, clouds, volcanoes and other moving objects, he credulously began to believe that they were all deities. According to Comte, this was the Theological consideration of the universe. But man very soon

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[1] Auguste Comte was a great philosopher who lived in France in the last century. He wrote a very important book on Sociology and has shown for the first time how the constitution of society can be scientifically considered. He has come to the conclusion after considering numerous sciences, that whichever science is taken, the consideration of it is first Theological and then Metaphysical and that, lastly it attains the Positive form. These three systems have been respectively given by me the ancient names of 'ādhidaivika', 'ādhyātmika' and 'ādhibhautika' in this book. Comte has not invented these methods. They are old methods, but he has fixed a new historical order for them and the only discovery made by him is that of all the three, the positive (ādhibhautika) system of consideration is the best. The most important of the works of this writer have been translated into English.

gave-up this idea and began to think that there must be some element in the shape of an Ātman in all these objects- According to Comte, this is the second stage of the progress of human knowledge; and this stage is called by him the Metaphysical stage. But when even after considering the universe in this way, actual practical scientific knowledge did not grow, man ultimately began to examine deeper and deeper only the visible properties of the objects in this world; and on that account, man has now begun to exercise greater control over the external world, as a result of his having been able to invent steam-engines, telegraphs etc. Comte calls this the Positive ādhibhautika) consideration and he has come to the conclusion that this method of consideration of any science or object is the most profitable one. According to Comte, we must adopt this method for scientifically considering Sociology or the science of Karma-Yoga; and after a careful consideration of the history of the world, this philosopher has drawn the following conclusion regarding the science of worldly life, from that point of view, namely that: the highest religion of

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every human being is to love the whole human race and to continually strive for the benefit of everybody. Mill, Spencer and other English philosophers may be said to- support this opinion. On the other hand, Kant, Haegel, Schopenhauer and

other German philosophers, have proved, that this positive method of considering Ethics is inefficient, and they have recently revived in Europe the method of basing Ethics on Metaphysics adopted by our Vedānta philosophers. This matter, however, will be dealt with in greater detail later on.

The reason why different writers have used the different, words 'kārya' and 'akārya' (doable and not-doable), 'dharmya' and 'adharma' (moral and immoral) in the meaning of 'good' and 'bad' although they all convey the same meaning, is that everyone has his own different way or view of dealing; with a particular subject-matter. The question of Arjuna was whether or not that war in which he would have to kill Bhīṣma, Droṇa, etc., was meritorious (Gī. 2.7); and if a Materialist had to answer this question, he would have, critically considered the palpable profit or loss of it to Arjuna personally, as also the results of it on the entire society and would have declared whether the fight was just (nyāyā) or unjust (anyāyā); because, these Materialists do not admit of any other test for determining the goodness or badness of any particular Action except the material, that is, the actual, external results of that Action on the world. But such an answer would not have satisfied Arjuna; his vision was more comprehensive; what he wanted was to know whether that war would in the end benefit his Self (ātman), not in this world alone, but from the next-world point of view. He had no doubt as to whether or not he would acquire the kingdom or material happiness as a

result of the death of Bhīṣma and Droṇa or whether his rule would be more beneficial to people than the rule of Duryodhana. In short, he had to see whether or not what he did was 'dharmya' (moral) or 'adharma' (immoral), 'puṇya' (non-sin) or 'pāpa' (sin); and the exposition in the Gītā has been made from that point of view. Not only in the Gītā but also in other places in the Mahābhārata has the examination of karma (Action) and akarma (non-Action) been

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made from this next-world and Metaphysical point of view and in it, the two words 'dharma' and 'adharma' have been primarily used in order to show the goodness or badness of any particular act. But as the word 'dharma' and its opposite correlative 'adharma' are likely to create confusion on account of their very comprehensive meaning, it is necessary to discuss here in greater detail the meanings in which those words have been principally used in the science of Karma-Yoga.

The word 'DHARMA' is in ordinary practice very often used to imply only the path leading to next-world happiness. When we ask someone "What is your dharma (religion)"? our intention is to ask him by what path he goes – whether "Vedic, Buddhist, Jain, Christian, Mahomedan or Parsi – for acquiring happiness in the next world; and the reply which he gives is also from the

same point of view. In the same way, where the subject-matter of the Vedic yajñas and yāgas instrumental to the acquisition of heaven is being considered, the word 'dharma' is used in the same [meaning, as in the canon "athāto dharmajijñāsā" etc. but the word 'dharma' is not to be understood in such a restricted meaning, and it is very often used for indicating the limitations of worldly morality, as in the phrases, 'rājadharmā' (the duty of kings), 'prajādharmā' (the duty of subjects), 'deśadharmā' (the duty of a country), 'jātidharmā' (the duty pertaining to a caste), 'kuladharmā' (the duty pertaining to clan or family), 'mitradharmā' (one's duty as a friend) etc. If these two meanings of the word dharma are to be individually explained, the dharma relating to the life after death may be called 'mokṣadharmā' or simply 'mokṣa' and the dharma relating to this worldly life, i.e., Ethics may be given the name of 'dharma' simply. For instance, in enumerating the four ideals of manhood (puruṣārtha), we say 'dharma' (morality), 'artha' (wealth), 'kāma' (desire), 'mokṣa' (Release). If 'mokṣa' is meant to be included in the first word 'dharma', then it would not be necessary to mention 'mokṣa' as an independent ideal at the end. Therefore, we must say that the writers of our scriptures use the word 'dharma' in this place as meaning the numerous ethical duties which form part of our worldly life. The same meaning is conveyed by the words kartavya-karma (duty), 'nīti' (Ethics), 'nītidharmā' (morality) or

'sadācaraṇa' (good conduct) used now-a-days. But in ancient Sanskrit treatises, the words 'nīti' ' or 'nītiśāstra' were used principally with reference to regal jurisprudence (rājanīti) and therefore, the ordinary exposition of duty (kartavya-karma) or good conduct (sad-vartana) used to be called the 'exposition of dharma' ('dharma-pravacana') instead of the ' exposition of 'nīti' ' ('nīti-pravacana'). But this technical distinction between the two words 'nīti'. ' and 'dharma' has not been adopted in all Sanskrit treatises; and, therefore, I too, have used the terms 'nīti', 'kartavya' or simply 'dharma' as synonymous; and, where the subject of Release (mokṣa) has to be considered, I have used the independent terms 'adhyātma' (Metaphysics) or 'bhakti-mārga' (Path of Devotion). The word 'dharma' has appeared on numerous occasions in the Mahābhārata, and whenever it has been said there that a particular person is bound to do a particular thing according to his 'dharma', the word 'dharma' means ethical science (kartavya-śāstra) or the then sociology (samāja-vyavasthā-śāstra); and wherever there has been occasion to refer to the paths leading to next- world happiness, in the latter half of the Śānti-parva, the specific word 'mokṣa-dharma' has been used. So also in the Manu-Smṛti and other Smṛti texts, in mentioning the specific duties of the four castes, Brahmin, kṣatriya, vaiśya, and śūdra, the word 'dharma' has been used on many occasions and in many places; and even in the Bhagavadgītā the word 'dharma' has

been used as meaning 'the duties of the four castes in this world' in the expression "svadharmam api cāvekṣya" (Gī. 2.31) where the Blessed Lord is telling Arjuna to fight, having regard to what his 'dharma' is, and also later on in the expression: "svadharṁ nidhanaṁ śreyaḥ paradharṁ bhayāvahaḥ" (Gī. 3.5), i.e., "it is better to die performing one's caste duties; following the duties enjoined on another caste is dangerous". The ancient this had created the institution of the four castes – which was in the nature of a division of labour – in order that all the affairs of society should go on without a hitch, and that society should be protected and maintained on all sides, without any particular person or group of persons having to bear the whole burden. Later on, people belonging to this society "became 'jātimātropajīvi' that is "persons, who forgetting their

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respective caste duties, belonged to a particular caste merely by- reason of birth." and became mere nominal Brahmins, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, or śūdras; but let us keep that thing aside for a time. Originally, this institution had been made for the maintenance- of society and it is quite clear that if any one of the four castes. had given up the 'dharma' i.e., duties allocated to it, or if any particular caste had totally ceased to exist and its place had not been taken by some other persons, the entire society would to that extent have been disabled and would later on have either been gradually destroyed or at least have



sunk to a very low stage. There are numerous societies in the Western hemisphere, which have come to prominence notwithstanding that they do- not have the institution of the four castes. But we must not forget that although the institution of the four castes may not be in existence among them, yet all the duties of the four castes are seen being performed in those societies, if not in the shape of castes, at any rate by some other arrangement in the shape of professional divisions or classes. In short, when we use the word 'dharma' from the worldly point of view, we- consider in what way society will be maintained (dhāraṇā) and benefited. Manu has said that that 'dharma' which is 'asukhodarka', that is to say, 'from which unhappiness ultimately results' should be given up (Manu. 4.176); and Bhīṣma says in the Satyānṛta-dharmasūtra of the Śāntiparva (Śān. 109.12), where the exposition of 'dharma' and 'adharma' is made, and before that, Śrī Kṛṣṇa also says in the Karna-parva (Ma. Bhā. Karṇa. 69. 59), that:—

dhāraṇād dharmam ity ahur dharmo dhārayate prajāḥ ।  
yat syād dhāraṇa saṁyuktaṁ sa dharma iti niścayaḥ ॥

that is, "the word Dharma comes from the root dhr̥, i.e., to hold or uphold, and all human beings are held together by dharma. That by which the holding together (of all human beings) takes place is dharma". Therefore, when this dharma ceases to be observed, the binding-ropes of society may be said to have become loose, and when these binding ropes are

loosened, society will be in the same position as the planetary system consisting of the Sun and the planets would be in the sky without the binding force of gravitation or as a ship

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would be on the ocean without a rudder. Therefore, Vyāsa in the Bhārata gives the advice that, in order that society should not come to an end by reaching such a lamentable state, money (artha) if it has to be acquired, must be acquired by 'dharma', that is, without disturbing the arrangement of society; and if the desires, such as the sex impulses (kāma) etc. have to be satisfied, that should also be done consistently with 'dharma'; . and he says at the end of the Bhārata that:—

ūrdhva<sup>h</sup>bāhur viraumy eṣa na ca kaścic chr̥ṇoti mām ।  
dharmād arthaś ca kāmāś ca sa dharmah̥ kiṁ na sevya<sup>t</sup>e  
॥

i.e., "Oh people I am haranguing you with raised hands, (but) no one listens to me! if both wealth (artha) and desires (kāma) can be acquired by dharma, (then) why do you not follow such a dharma?" My readers will from this understand the chief meaning in which the word 'dharma' has been used in the expression dharma-saṁhitā, when the Mahābhārata, from the point of view of 'dharma', is looked upon as the fifth Veda or dharma-saṁhitā; and for the same reason, namely, on the

ground that it is a dharma-grantha, has the Mahābhārata been included among the religious texts prescribed for daily recital in the Brahma-yajña (ritual for Brahmins) – as is shown by the use of the symbolical words: "Nārāyaṇam namaskṛtya" – along with the two treatises Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā and Uttara-Mīmāṃsā (which deal with the question of next-world happiness).

Reading the exposition made by me above of what is dharma and what is adharma, someone may object: if you accept these principles of 'the maintenance of society' (samāja-dhāraṇā and 'general welfare' (sarva-bhūta-hitam), as mentioned in the second chapter when discussing the question of Truth and Falsehood (satyāṇṛta), then there is no difference between your point of view and the Materialistic point of view; because, both these principles are outwardly real, that is Materialistic. This question has been dealt with by me in detail in the next chapter. For the present, I will only say that although we accept maintenance of society as being the chief outward use of dharma, yet we never lose sight of the Redemption of the Ātman (ātma-kalyāṇa) or Release (mokṣa) which is the highest ideal according to the Vedic or all other religions and which is the special feature of our view-point. Whether it is maintenance

of society or the general material welfare of everybody, if these externally useful principles obstruct the Redemption of the Ātman, we do not want them. If even our works on medicine maintain that the medical science is a useful science, because it serves as a means for obtaining Release (mokṣa), by protecting the body, then it is absolutely impossible that our religious writers would divorce the Karma-Yoga-Śāstra, which considers the most important subject of the performance of various worldly Actions, from the Metaphysical philosophy of Release. And therefore, we look upon that Action which is favourable to our Metaphysical betterment as 'puṇya' (religiously meritorious), 'dharma' (moral), or 'śubha' (good) and that which is unfavourable to it, as 'pāpa' (sinful), 'adharma' (immoral), or 'aśubha' (bad). It is for this very reason that we use the words 'dharma' and 'adharma' (notwithstanding that they have a double meaning and are to a certain extent ambiguous) in place of the words 'kartavya' (duty) 'akartavya' (non-duty) and 'kārya' (doable) and 'akārya' (non-doable). Even when the worldly affairs or activities in the external world are primarily to be considered, we consider whether or not these activities are conducive to Ātmic [1] benefit, simultaneously with considering their external effects. If a Materialist is asked why I should sacrifice my own benefit for the benefit of others, what answer can he give except by saying: "That is ordinary human nature"? The writers of our

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[1] This word Ātmic (i.e., of the Ātman) has been coined by me on the analogy 'Vedic' ~ Translator.

Śāstras have seen further than this and the science of Karma-Yoga has been considered in the Mahābhārata from this comprehensive Metaphysical standpoint, and Vedānta has for the same reason been dealt with in the Bhagavadgītā. Even the ancient Greek philosophers were of the opinion that one has to take 'the greatest benefit' or 'the climax of virtue' as the highest ideal of mankind and dealt with the question of the doable and the not-doable from that point of view; and Aristotle has in his book on Ethics said that all these things are included in the Ātmic benefit (1.7, 8). Yet, Aristotle has not given due importance to Ātmic benefit. That is not the case with our philosophers. They have laid down, that Ātmic benefit or

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Metaphysical perfection is the first and the highest duty of every man; that the question of the doable and the not-doable must be considered on the basis that Ātmic benefit is more important than any other benefit; and that, it is not proper to consider that question without reference to Metaphysical philosophy. The same position seems to have been accepted in modern times by some Western philosophers, in dealing with the question of the doable and the not-doable. For instance, the German philosopher Kant first wrote the metaphysical book Critique of Pure Reason, that is, of 'vyavasāyātmikā', (i.e., pure) 'buddhi' (i.e., Reason), and subsequently the book

Critique of Practical Reason, that is, of 'vāsanātmaka' (i.e. practical) 'buddhi' (i.e., Reason). [1] And even in England, Green has started his book entitled Prolegomena to Ethics with the consideration of the Ātman, which is the bed-rock of the entire universe. But, as the works of purely materialistic philosophers on Ethics are principally taught in our colleges the fundamental principles of the Karma-Yoga mentioned in the Gītā, are not well understood even by learned persons among us, who have had an English education.

It will be clear from the exposition made by me above why we apply the common word 'DHARMA' chiefly to worldly morality or to systems laid down for the maintenance of society. Not only in the Sanskrit treatises, Mahābhārata and Bhagavadgītā, but also in vernacular works is the word 'dharma' always used as meaning worldly duties or laws- We understand the words kuladharmā and kulācāra as synonymous. The Marathi poet, Moropant, has used the word 'dharma' in this sense, in describing the incident in the Bhārata war when Karṇa had got out of his chariot for raising the wheel of his chariot which had sunk into the earth, and Arjuna was on the point of killing him. Karṇa then said:— "It is not the ethics of warfare (yuddhadharma) to kill an enemy when he is unarmed," and Śrī

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[1] Kant was a German philosopher, and he is looked upon as the father of modern philosophy. Two of his works, the Critique of Pure Reason and the Critique of Practical Reason are well-known. The work written by Green is known as Prolegomena to Ethics.

Kṛṣṇa retaliated by reminding him of the previous incidents of the attempted

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denuding of Draupadī, or the murder of Abhimanyu, when alone, by a number of persons, and asking him: "Where was then your dharma, Oh, Rādhāsuta?" with reference to all those incidents; and even in the Mahābhārata the word 'dharma' has been used in relating this incident in the expression "kva te dharmaḥ tadā gataḥ", i.e., "where did your 'dharma' (morality) go then?", and it is shown that it is morally right to give measure for measure to such immoral persons. In short, as it has become usual, whether in Sanskrit or in Prakrit literature, to use the word 'dharma' as indicating the rules of morality which have been laid down by high and reverend persons, with reference to various matters, for the maintenance of society, I have adopted the same word in this book. These rules, which have been laid down by reverend people (śiṣṭa) and which have become acceptable on all hands and are known as 'respectable behaviour' (śiṣṭācāra), are, from this point of view, the root of morality (dharma); and therefore, in the Mahābhārata (Anu. 104.157) and also in the Smṛti treatises there are such statements as: "ācāraprabhavo dharmah", i.e., "morality springs from custom" or: "ācāraḥ paramo dharmah", i.e., "rules of custom are the highest morality" (Manu. 1.108), or (where the origin of morality is mentioned), "vedaḥ smṛtiḥ

sadācāraḥ svasya ca priyamātmanaḥ ", (Manu. 2.12), i.e., "the Vedas, the Smṛtis, good conduct and that which we ourselves desire." But that is not enough for the science of Karma-Yoga, and, as has been stated by me before in the second chapter, it is necessary to fully and critically consider what causes led to a particular ācāra or code of conduct being fixed.

We must also here consider another definition of the word 'dharma' which is come across in ancient treatises. This is the definition given by the Mīmāṃsā school. That school says: "codanālakṣaṇo 'rtho dharmah" (Jai. Sū. 1.1.2). 'Codanā ' means 'inspiring,' that is, some authoritative person saying or ordering: "Do this" or "Do not do this". So long as no one has laid down such a limitation or such a limitation has not come into existence, one is at liberty to do what he likes. This means that dharma originally came into existence as a result of such limitations, and this definition of morality

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is to a certain extent similar to the opinions of the well-known English writer Hobbes. The human being, in the aboriginal condition behaved according to the particular frame of mind ruling at the time. But when he later on found out that such unrestricted behaviour was not beneficial on the whole, he came to the definite conclusion that it was in the best interests



of everybody to lay down and observe certain restrictions on the self-inspired actions of the organs, and every human being began to observe these limitations, which have gained ground on account of general acceptance (śiṣṭācāra), or for some other reason, as if they were laws; and when such limitations grew in number, they formed themselves into a code. I have mentioned in the previous chapter that the institution of marriage was not at first in vogue, but was brought into existence by Śvetaketu, and also that the prohibition against drink was first laid down by Śukrācārya. In defining the word dharma as: "codanālakṣaṇo 'rtho dharmah" only the fact of such restrictions having been dictated by these law-givers has been taken into account and the motives of Śvetaketu or of Śukrācārya in laying down these limitations has been lost sight of. Even in the case of a rule of morality (dharma), someone first realises its importance and then it is promulgated. It is not necessary to ask anyone to eat, drink, and make merry, because, those are the inherent tendencies of the physical organs. That is what is meant by Manu when he says: "na māṁsabhakṣaṇe doṣo na madye na ca maithune" (Manu. 5.56), i.e., "Eating flesh or drinking wine or enjoying sexual intercourse, is not sinful.", that is, there is nothing in them which is contrary to the rules of nature. All these things are the inherent desires, not only of, men but of every living being[ "pravṛttir eṣā bhūtānām", i.e., "these are the tendencies of created beings". Morality consists in putting proper limitations on an unrestricted course of life resulting from

passions in the interest of the maintenance of society or of general welfare. Because:—

āhāranidrā bhayamaithunam ca sāmānyam etat  
paśubhir narāṇām ।  
dharmo hi teṣām adhiko viśeṣo dharmeṇa hīnāḥ  
paśubhiḥ samānāḥ ॥

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i.e., "eating, sleeping, fear, and sexual relations are the heritage of men, same as of animals; dharma, (that is, restraining them by rules of morality), is the difference between man and beast; and those who are not governed by this code of morality may be looked upon as beasts." There is in the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata, a similar verse (Śān. 294.29 ] and the verse in the Bhāgavata, which prescribes limitations on the desires of hunger etc. has been quoted in the previous chapter. In the same way what the Blessed Lord is referring to, is the nature of morality to lay down limitations on unrestricted mental impulses, where in the Bhagavadgītā, He says to Arjuna:—

indriyasyendriyasy ārthe rāga dveṣau vyavasthitau ।  
tayo na vaśam āgacchet tau hy asya paripanthinau ॥

i.e. "the attractions and repulsions between the organs of sense on the one hand and the various objects which are pleasurable or repulsive to them on the other are unchangingly inherent. One should not become their slaves, because, both love and hate are enemies". The organs of a man urge him to behave like a beast, and his intelligence pulls him in the opposite direction. 'Those persons who redeem themselves by sacrificing the animal tendencies rampant in their bodies into the fire of this warfare are the true sacrificers, and are indeed blessed.

Call dharma, 'ācāra-prabhava' (born of custom), or call it 'dhāraṇāt' (something which upholds or keeps together), or call it 'codanākṣaṇa' (some precept which has been dictated), which-ever definition of dharma (worldly morality) is accepted, none of them is much, useful for coming to a definite conclusion, when one has to decide between what is moral and what immoral. The first definition only tells us what the fundamental form of dharma is! The second definition tells us what its external use is, and the third definition tells us that moral restrictions were laid down in the beginning by some persons or other. Not only is there much difference between customs and customs but, as there are numerous consequences of one and the same act, and also as the 'codanā' i.e., precepts of different ṛṣis are also different, we have to look out for some other way of determining what the dharma is, when there are doubts in the

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matter. When Yakṣa asked Yudhiṣṭhira what this other way was, Yudhiṣṭhira replied:-

tarko 'pratiṣṭhaḥ śrutayo vibhinnāḥ naiko ṛṣir yasya  
vacaḥ pramāṇam ।  
dharmasya tattvaṁ nihitaṁ guhāyām mahājano yena  
gataḥ sa panthāḥ ॥

(Ma. Bhā. Vana. 312.115).

that is: " inferential logic is uncertain, i.e., it is such that it will give birth to various inferences according to different degrees of keenness of intelligence in men; the Śrutis, that is the precepts of the Vedas, are all mutually conflicting; and, as regards the Smṛtis, there is not a single ṛṣi (sage) whose precept we can look upon as more authoritative than that of others. Well, if we seek the fundamental principle of this (worldly) dharma, it is lost in darkness, that is to say, it is such as cannot be understood by a man of ordinarily intelligence. Therefore, the path which has been followed by venerable persons is the path of dharma." Very well! But who are the venerable persons (mahājanah)? That word 'mahājanah' cannot be interpreted to mean 'a large (mahā) collection of persons (janah)'. Because; following the path which is laid down by ordinary persons (or collection of people), whose

minds are never troubled by consideration of what is right and what is wrong, will be like playing a blind man's buff or like "andhenaiva niyamānā yathāndhāḥ" i.e. "the blind was led by the blind", as stated in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad. If you interpret the word "mahājanāḥ" as meaning 'erudite and venerable persons' – and that is the meaning conveyed in the above verse – then, where is there any uniformity in behaviour? The sinless "Rāmacandra" discarded his wife though she had passed through the ordeal of fire, merely on the ground of public criticism; and the same Rāmacandra, order that Sugriva should be on his side, entered into a- offensive and defensive alliance with him, by making him, 'tulyārimitra', i.e., 'with common friends and enemies', and killed Vāli who had in no way wronged him! Paraśurāma murdered his own mother at the behest of his father, and as regards the Pāṇḍavas, five of them had only one wife!

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If you consider the gods in the heavens, then some of them are the paramours of Ahilyā, whereas others are seen lying in the sky with mutilated bodies, being wounded by the arrows of Rudra, as was Brahmadeva because he ran after his own daughter in the form of a stag (Ai. Brā. 3.33). With these things before his mind's eye, Bhavabhūti has put the words: "vṛddhās te na vicāraṇīyacaritāḥ", i.e., "one must not attach too much importance to the doings of these old people" in the mouth of

Lava in the Uttarakāmarītra. A writer, who has written in English the history of the Devil, has said in his book that if one considers the history of the warfare between the supporters of the gods and of the Devil, we see that very often the gods (devas) have cheated the non-gods (daityas); and in the same way, in the Kauṣītaki-Brāhmaṇopaniṣad (See, Kauṣī. 3.1 as also Ai. Brā. 7.28), Indra says to Pratardana: "I have killed Vṛtra (although he was a Brahmin); I have torn into pieces the ascetic Arunmukha, and thrown the carrion to wolves and, breaking all the various treaties which had been made by me, I have killed the friends and clansmen of Prahlāda and also killed the demons named Pauloma and Kālakhaṇḍa; yet on that account, "tasya me tatra na loma ca mā mīyate" i.e., "not a hair of my head has been touched". If one says: "You have no occasion to consider the evil these venerable persons, but, as stated in the Taittirīyopaniṣad (Taitti. 1.11.2), imitate only their good actions, and neglect the rest; for instance, obey your father, as was done by Paraśurāma, but do not kill your mother", then, the primary question of how good actions are to be differentiated from bad actions again arises. Therefore, after having described his various deeds as mentioned above, Indra says to Pratardana: "Bearing in mind that that man who has fully Realised his Self is not prejudicially affected by patricide, matricide, infanticide, theft, or any other sinful actions, try and realise in the first instance what the Ātman is, so that all your doubts will be answered"; and he has thereafter explained to Pratardana the science of the Ātman.

In short, although the precept "mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ" may be easy to allow for ordinary persons; yet it does not meet all possible contingencies; and thoughtful persons have ultimately to enter

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into the Philosophy of the Ātman (ātma-jñāna) and ascertain the true principle underlying the actions of the venerable persons (mahājanah), however deep that principle may be. It is for this reason that the advice: "na devacaritaṁ caret" i.e., "one must not follow only the external actions of gods", is given. Some persons have hit upon an easier way for determining the doable and the not-doable. They say that whatever virtue is taken, we must always take care against excess of it, for such excess turns a virtue into a vice. Charity is a virtue; but, "atidānād balir baddhaḥ", i.e., "because of too much charity, Bali was undone". The well-known Greek philosopher Aristotle has in his book on Ethics prescribed the same test for distinguishing between the doable and the not-doable; and he has clearly shown how every virtue, in excess, is the cause of one's undoing. Even Kālidāsa has come to the conclusion (see Raghuvamśa 17.47) that courage, pure and simple, is like the cruel behaviour of an animal like a tiger; and morality, pure and simple, is nothing else but cowardice; and that the king Atithi, used to rule by a judicious admixture of the sword and regal jurisprudence. If a man speaks too much,

he is talkative, if he speaks too little, he is reserved; if he spends too much, he is a spendthrift, if he spends too little, he is a miser; if he is too advanced, he is wayward, and if he lags behind, he is a laggard; if he insists on anything too much, he is obstinate, and if he insists too little, he is fickle; if he is too accommodating, he makes himself cheap, and if he remains stiff, then he is proud: this is how Bhartṛhari and others have described some good and bad qualities. However, such a rule of the thumb does not overcome all difficulties, because, who is to decide what is 'too much', and what is 'moderate'? What may be 'too much' for one or on any particular occasion, may be too little for another person or on another occasion.

Jumping into the firmament at the moment of his birth in order to catch hold of the Sun was as nothing to Maruti (Vā. Rāma. 7. 35). Therefore, as the śyena bird advised the King Śibī, every man, when faced with the discernment between the duty (dharma) and the non-duty (adharma) should on every occasion consider the relative merits and the importance or unimportance of mutually conflicting duties,

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and intelligently arrive at a conclusion as to the true duty or proper Action:—

avirodhāt tu yo dharmāḥ sa dharmāḥ satyavikrama |  
virodhiṣu mahīpāla niścitya gurulāghavam |



na bādhā vidyate yatra taṁ dharmam samupācaret ||

(Ma. Bhā. Vana. 131.11.12 and Manu. 9.299)

i.e., "Oh, Satyavikrama! that is dharma (duty) in which there is no contradiction; Oh, King!, if there is such a contradiction, then come to a decision as to the relative worth of the act and the opposition, and follow that path of duty in which, there is no opposition". But one cannot, on that account only, say that the true test of determining the proper conduct on a doubtful occasion is to discriminate between the duty and the non-duty. Because, as we often see in ordinary life, different learned people discriminate in different ways, according to their own lights, and arrive at several different decisions as regards the morality of a particular act; and this is what is meant by the words, "tarko 'pratiṣṭhaḥ" in the words above. We must, therefore, now see whether or not there are any other means for arriving at a correct solution of these doubtful points about the duty and the non-duty; and if so, what those means are; and if there are more than one ways, then, which is the best way of all. This is what science has to determine for us. The true characteristic feature of a science- is:

"anekasaṁśayocchedi parokṣārthasya darśakam", i.e., "it must remove confusion regarding matters which the mind cannot at first grasp on account of numerous doubts which spring up, and make their meaning free from doubt and easy,, and, even give a proper insight into matters which might not. be actually before the eyes or which may be matters of the future"; and the fact that by learning astronomy, one can. predict the

occurrence and the time of future eclipses justifies. the words "parokṣārthasya darśakam" used in the latter part of the above definition. But in order that all these various, difficulties should be solved, one has first to see what these, difficulties are. And, therefore, ancient as also modern writers, before dealing with the subject-matter to be proved by a science first enumerate all the other existing aspects of the same

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subject-matter, and show the faults or insufficiency in them. Following this method, I shall, before mentioning the YOGA or device established or preached in the Gītā for determining the doability or non-doability. of any particular Action, first consider the more well-known of the other devices which are prescribed by philosophers for the same purpose. It is true that these other devices were not very much in vogue in India but were promulgated principally by Western philosophers. But it cannot, on that account, be said that I should not consider them in this book; because, it is necessary to be acquainted with these other devices, if even to a small extent, not only for the purpose of comparison, but also in order to understand the true importance of the Metaphysical (ādhyaत्मika) Karma-Yoga expounded in the Gītā.

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# CHAPTER IV.

## THE MATERIALISTIC THEORY OF HAPPINESS

### (ĀDHIBHAUTIKA SUKHAVĀDA)

duḥkhād uddvijate sarvaḥ sarvasya sukham īpsitam । [1]

~ Mahābhārata. Śānti. (139.61).

As we have seen that stock precepts like:– 'mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ', i.e. 'follow the path which has been followed by venerable persons', or, 'ati sarvatra varjayet', i.e., 'do too much of nothing', do not satisfactorily explain:– (i) why Manu and the other legislators laid down the rules of 'ahimsā satyamasteya' (Non-Violence, Veracity, Not-stealing) etc., (ii) whether those rules are mutable or immutable, (iii) what their extent or the fundamental principle underlying them is, and (iv) which precept should be followed when two or more of them are equally in point and yet conflict with each other, it is now necessary for us to see whether or not there are any

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[1] that is:– "Everyone is unwilling to suffer pain and everyone wants happiness".

definite means for properly determining these questions, and deciding which is the most beneficial or meritorious path of duty, as also, in what way and from what point of view we can determine the relative importance or the greater or less worth of mutually conflicting principles of morality. I have in the last chapter explained that there are three ways of considering the questions involved in the exposition of Action and Non-Action, namely, the Positive, (ādhībhautika), the Theological (ādhīdaivika), and the Metaphysical (ādhyātmika), just as in the case of the scientific exposition of other matters. According to our philosophers the most excellent of these ways is the Metaphysical way. But, as it is necessary to carefully consider the other two methods in order to fully understand the importance of the Metaphysical method, I have in this chapter first considered the fundamental Materialistic principles underlying the examination of the question of Action and Non-Action. The positive physical sciences, which have had an immense growth in modern times have to deal principally with the external or visible properties of tangible objects.

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Therefore, those persons who have spent their lives in studying the physical sciences, or who attach much importance to the critical methods particular to these sciences, get into the habit of always considering only the external effects of things; and their philosophical vision being thereby to a certain

extent narrowed, they do not, in discussing any particular thing, attach much importance to causes which are Metaphysical, or intangible, or invisible, or which have reference to the next world. But, although on that account, they leave out of consideration the Metaphysical or the next-world point of view, yet, as codes of morality are necessary for the satisfactory regulation of the mutual relations of human beings and for public welfare, even these philosophers, who are indifferent about life after death or who have no faith in intangible or Metaphysical knowledge, (and also necessarily no faith in God), look upon the science of Proper Action (Karma-Yoga) as a most important science; and, therefore, there has been in the past and there is still going on, a considerable amount of discussion in the West, as to whether the science of Proper and Improper Action can be satisfactorily dealt with in the same way as the physical sciences, that is to say, by means of arguments based on purely worldly and visible effects. As a result of this discussion, modern Western philosophers have made up their minds that the science of Metaphysics is of no use whatsoever for the consideration of Ethics, that the goodness or badness of any particular Action must be determined by considering only those of its external effects which are actually visible to us, and that we can do so. Any act which a man performs, is performed by him either for obtaining happiness, or for warding off unhappiness. One may even say that 'the happiness of all human beings' is the highest worldly goal, and if the ultimate visible resultant of all Action is

thus definite, the correct method of deciding Ethical problems, is to determine the moral value of all Actions by weighing the greater or lesser possibilities of each Action producing happiness or preventing unhappiness. If one judges the goodness or badness of any particular object in ordinary life by considering its external usefulness, e. g., if we decide that that cow which has short horns and which is docile, and

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at the same time gives a large quantity of milk is the best flow, then on the same principle, we must also consider that Action as the most meritorious one, from the ethical point of view, of which the external result of producing happiness or preventing unhappiness is the highest. If it is possible to decide the ethical value of any particular act in such an easy and scientific way, namely, by considering the greater or less value of its purely external and visible effects, one should not trouble about entering into the discussion of the Self and Non-Self (ātmānātma); "arke cen madhu vindeta kimartham parvataṁ vrayet" [1] i.e., "if one can get honey near at hand where he

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[1] The word 'arka' in this stanza has been interpreted by some as meaning the 'rui' tree (swallow-wart or *calotropis gigantea*). But, in his commentary on the Śāṅkarabhāṣya on the Brahma-Sūtras 3.4.3, Ānandagiri has defined the word 'arka' as meaning 'near.' The other part of this verse is "siddhasya ārthasya saṁprāptau ko vidvān yatnam-ācāret", i.e., "if the desired object is already achieved, what wise man

sits, then where is the sense of going into the hills to look for honey-combs?" I call this method of determining the morality of any particular Action by considering merely its external results the 'ādhibhautika sukhavāda' (the Materialistic Theory of Happiness), because, the happiness to be considered for determining the morality of any Action is, according to this theory, actually visible and is external – that is, is such as arises from the contact of the organs with external objects, and subsequently Materialistic (ādhibhautika) – and this school has likewise been brought into existence by those philosophers who consider the world from the purely positive or Materialistic point of view. But, it is not possible to fully discuss this theory in this book. It would be necessary to write an independent book to even merely summarise the opinions of the different writers. I have, therefore, in this chapter collected together and given as precisely as possible as much general information about this Materialistic school of Ethics as is absolutely necessary for fully understanding the nature and importance of the science of Proper Action expounded in the Bhagavadgītā. If any one wants to go deeper into the matter, he must study the original works of the Western philosophers.

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From my statement above, that Materialistic philosophers are apathetic about the science of the Ātman or about the next world, one must not draw the conclusion that all the learned persons who subscribe to this path, are selfish, self-centred or immoral. There belong to this school high-minded philosophers like Comte, Spencer, Mill, and others, who most earnestly and enthusiastically preached that striving for the benefit of the whole world by making at least one's worldly outlook as comprehensive as possible (if one does not believe in the next world), is the highest duty of every man; and as their works are replete with the most noble and deep thoughts, they ought to be read by everyone. Although the paths of the science of Proper Action are many, yet, so long as one has not given the go-bye to the external ideal of 'the benefit of the world', one must not ridicule a philosopher on the ground that his method of dealing with the philosophy of Ethics is different from one's own. I shall now precisely and in their proper order, consider the various divisions into which the modern or ancient Materialistic philosophers fall, as a result of differences of opinion between them as to whether the external material happiness which has to be considered for determining the ethical propriety or impropriety of an action is one's own happiness or the happiness of another, and whether of one person or of several persons; and I shall also consider to what extent these opinions are proper or faultless.

The first of these classes is of those who maintain the theory of pure selfish happiness. This school of thought says that there is no such thing as life after death or as philanthropy; that all Metaphysical sciences have been written by dishonest people to serve their own ends; that the only thing which is real in this world is one's own interest; and that, that act by which this self-interest can be achieved or whereby one can promote one's own material happiness is the most just, the most proper, and the most meritorious act. This opinion was, at a very early date, vociferously proclaimed in India by Cārvāka. and the mischievous advice given by Jābāli to Śrī Rāma at the end of the Ayodhyākāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa, as also the Kaṇikanīti in the Mahābhārata (Ma,

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Bhā. Ā. 143), pertains to this school of thought. The opinion of the illustrious Cārvāka was that when the five primordial elements are fused together, they acquire the quality of an Ātman, and when the body is burnt, the Ātman is burnt with it; therefore, a wise man should not bother about the Ātman, but should enjoy himself so long as life lasts, even borrowing money for the purpose, if necessary; one should "ṛṇam kṛtvā ghṛtaṁ pibet", i.e., "borrow money and drink clarified butter", because there is nothing after death. As Cārvāka was born in India, he satisfied himself with prescribing the drinking of clarified butter (ghṛtaṁ pibet) otherwise, this canon would

have been transformed into ' "ṛṇaṁ kṛtvā surāṁ pibet ', i.e., 'borrow money and drink wine'. This school says: "What is this dharma and this charity? All the objects which have been created in this world by the Parameśvara, – what did I say? I have made a mistake! Of course, there is no Parameśvara– all the things which I see in this world have come into existence only for my enjoyment, and as I can see no other purpose for them, there is, of course, no such purpose. When I am dead, the world is over; and therefore, so long as I am alive, I shall acquire all the various things which can, be acquired, acquiring this to-day and that to-morrow, and thereby I shall satisfy all my desires. If at all I go in for any religious austerity or charity, that will be only to increase my reputation and worth; and if I make a rājasūya yajña or an Aśvamedha yajña, that too will be for the sole purpose of establishing that my power is unchallenged in all directions. In short, the EGO, the 'I' is the only focus of this world, and this 'I' is the sum and substance of all morality; all the rest is false ". The description of godless endowment (āsurī saṁpatti) given in the 16th chapter of the Gītā in the words: "īśvaro 'ham ahaṁ bhogī siddho 'haṁ balavān sukhī" (Gī. 16.14), i.e., "I am the Īśvara, I am the one who enjoys, and I am the siddha (perfect), the all-powerful, and the happy", applies quite appropriately to the opinions of persons who follow this philosophy. If instead of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, there had been some person like Jābāli belonging to this sect for advising Arjuna, he would, in the first place, have slapped

Arjuna on the face, and then said to him: "What a fool are you!  
When you

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have without effort got this golden opportunity of fighting and conquering everybody and enjoying all kinds of royal enjoyment and happiness, you are uttering the most foolish things, being lost in the futile confusion of 'shall I do this, or shall I do that'! You will not get such a chance again. What a fool are you to think of the Ātman and of relatives! Strike! and enjoy the empire of Hastināpura after having removed all the thorns from your path! In this lies your truest happiness. Is there anything in this world except one's visible material happiness?" But, Arjuna was not anxious to hear such a disgustingly selfish, purely self-centred, and ungodlike advice; and he had, already in advance, said to Śrī Kṛṣṇa:

etān na hantum icchāmi ghnatopi madhusūdana ।  
api trailokyarājyasya hetoḥ kiṁ nu mahīkrte ॥ (Gī.  
1.36).

that is, "If I had to acquire for myself (by this war), the kingdom even of the three worlds – to say nothing of the kingdom of this world – (that is, such physical pleasures), I do not desire for that purpose to kill the Kauravas. I do not mind if they slit open my throat". Even a mere reference to this

ungodlike self-centred and entirely selfish doctrine of material happiness, which Arjuna had, in this way, denounced in advance, would amount to a refutation of it. This extremely low stage reached by the school of Material Happiness, which looks upon one's own physical pleasures as the highest ideal of man, and throws religion and morality to the winds, and totally disregards what happens to other people, has been treated by all writers on the science of Proper Action, and even by ordinary people, as extremely immoral, objectionable and disdainable. Nay!, this theory does not even deserve the name of Ethics or of an ex- position of morality; and therefore, instead of wasting more time in considering this subject, we will now turn to the next class of Materialistic philosophers.

Pure and naked selfishness or self-centredness never succeeds in the world; because, although physical and material pleasures may be desirable to everyone, yet, as is a matter of actual experience, if our happiness interferes with the happiness

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of others, those others will certainly do us harm. Therefore other Materialistic philosophers maintain that although one's happiness or. selfish purposes may be one's goal, yet, in as much as it is not possible for one to acquire such happiness,

unless one makes some sacrifices for other people similar to those one oneself wants from them, one must long-sightedly take into account the happiness of others in order to obtain one's own happiness. I put these Materialistic philosophers in the second class. It may be said that the Materialistic exposition of Ethics truly begins at this point. Because, instead of saying like Cārvāka, that no ethical limitations are necessary for the maintenance of society, persons belonging to this school have made an attempt to explain their own view as to why these limitations must be observed by everybody. These people say that, if one minutely considers how the theory of Harmlessness came into this world, and why people follow that doctrine, there is no other reason at the root of it except the fear based on selfish considerations that, 'if I kill others, others will kill me, and then I will lose my happiness', and that all other moral precepts have come into existence as a result of this selfish fear in the same way as this law of Harmlessness. If we suffer pain, we cry, and if others suffer pain, we feel pity for them. But why? Because the fear that we in our turn may have to suffer the same pain, that is, of course, the thought of our possible future unhappiness comes to our minds. Charity, generosity, pity, love, gratefulness, humbleness, friendship, and other qualities which at first sight appear to be for the benefit of others are, if we trace them to their origin, nothing but means of acquiring our own happiness or warding off our own unhappiness in another form. Everybody whosoever helps

others or gives in charity with the internal motive that if he found himself in the same position, other people should help him; and we love others, only in order that others should love us. At any rate, the selfish idea that other people should call us good is at the back of our minds. The expressions 'doing good to others' and 'the welfare of others' are words based on confusion of thought. What is real, is one's own selfish purpose; and one's own selfish purpose means obtaining one's own happiness or warding off one's own

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unhappiness. This amounts to saying that a mother suckles her baby not on account of love, but she does this selfish act in order to ease herself (as her breasts are full of milk and she feels the inconvenience of the pressure), or in order that the child, after growing up, should love her and give her happiness. The tact that people of this school of thought, admit that it is necessary to long-sightedly observe such moral; principles as will permit of the happiness of others – though that may be for obtaining one's own happiness – is the important difference between this school of thought and the school of Cārvāka. Nevertheless, the idea that a human, being is nothing but a statue cast into the mould of selfish physical desires, which is the opinion of the Cārvāka school, has been left untouched by this school. This opinion has been supported in England by Hobbes and in France by Helvetius. But there are not to be

found many followers of this school in' England or anywhere else. After the exposition of Ethics by Hobbes had been published, it was refuted by philosophers like Butler, [1] who proved that human nature as a whole is not absolutely selfish, and that there exist in a human being from birth such other qualities as humanity, love, gratitude etc., to a greater or less extent, side by side with selfishness; and, therefore, in considering any act or any dealing from the ethical point of view, one should instead of considering only the qualities of selfishness or even of long-sighted selfishness, always consider the two inherent distinct tendencies of human beings, namely, 'selfishness', (svārtha) and the 'unselfishness', (parārtha). If even a cruel animal like a tigress is prepared to sacrifice her life for the sake of her cubs, it follows that saying that the emotions of love and philanthropy come into existence in the human mind merely out of selfishness is futile, and that weighing between the duty and the non-duty merely from the point of view of long-sighted selfishness is

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scientifically incorrect. Out ancient writers had not lost sight of the fact that persons, whose intelligence has remained

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[1] The opinion of Hobbes has been given in the book called Leviathan ; and the opinions of Butler are to be found in his Essay called Sermons on Human Nature. Morley has given the summary of the book of Helvetius in his (Morley's) book on Diderot, (Volume II. Chap V)



"unpurified on account of their having remained wholly engrossed in family life, very often do whatever they do in this world for others, only with an eye to their own benefit. The saint Tukārāma has said:— "the daughter-in-law weeps for the mother-in-law, but the motive in her heart is quite different" (Gā. 2583.2); and some of our philosophers have gone even beyond Helvetius. For instance, in commenting on the proposition laid down by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya in his Brahma-Sūtrabhāṣya (Ve. Sū. Śāṁ. Bhā. 2.2.3) on the authority of the Gautama-Nyāyasūtra (1.1, 18) 'pravartanā lakṣaṇā doṣāḥ', i.e., 'all human activity, whether selfish or unselfish, is faulty', Ānandagiri says that: "We practice kindness or benevolence towards others only in order to remove that pain" which results from the emotion of pity awakening in our hearts." This argument of Ānandagiri is to be found in almost all our books on the Path of Renunciation, and all that is principally attempted to be proved from it is, that all Actions are selfish, and, therefore, non-performable. But in the conversation between Yājñavalkya and his wife Maitreyī, which appears twice in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (Br. 2.4; 4.5), this very argument has been made use of in another and a strange way. In answering the question of Maitreyī: "How can one acquire immortality?", Yājñavalkya says to her: "O Maitreyī, the husband is loved by the wife, not for the sake of the husband, but for the sake of her own ātman; in the same way, the son is not loved by us for his own sake; we love him for our own

sake! [1] The same law applies to wealth, animals, and all other objects. 'ātmanastu kāmāya sarvaṃ priyaṃ bhavati', i.e., 'We like all things for the sake of our Self (ātman)', and if all love is in

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this way based on Self, must we not, in the first place, find out what our Ātman (Self) is? " And, therefore, the concluding advice of Yājñavalkya is; "ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ" , i.e., "See (first) what the ātman '(Self) is, hear the ātman, and meditate and contemplate on the atman". When the true form of the Ātman has in this way been realised by following this advice, the whole world becomes Self-ised (ātma-maya), and the distinction between selfishness (svārtha) and unselfishness (parārtha) in the mind ceases to exist. Although this argument of Yājñavalkya is apparently the same as that of Hobbes, yet, as can be easily seen, the inferences drawn by them respectively from that advice are contrary to each other. Hobbes attaches higher importance to selfishness, and, looking upon all philanthropy

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[1] "What say you of natural affection? Is that also a species of self-love? Yes; all is self-love. Your children are loved only because they are yours. Your friend, for a like reason. And your country engages you only so far as it has a connection with yourself": this is the way in which Hume has referred to this line of argument in his hook Of the Dignity or Meanness of Human Nature. Hume's own opinion in the matter is different.

as long-sighted selfishness, says that there is nothing in this world except selfishness; whereas Yājñavalkya, relying on the word 'sva' (one's own) in the phrase 'svārtha' (selfishness), shows, on the authority of that word, that from the Metaphysical point of view, all created beings are harmoniously comprised in our Ātman and our Ātman is likewise harmoniously comprised in all created beings; and he, in that way, gets rid of the apparently dualistic (dvaita) conflict between the interest of oneself and the interest of others. These opinions of Yājñavalkya and of the school of Renunciation will be considered in greater detail later on. I have referred here to the opinions of Yājñavalkya and others only for the purpose of showing how our ancient writers have more or less praised or accepted as correct the principle that 'the ordinary tendency of human beings is selfish, that' is, is concerned with their own happiness ', and drawn from it inferences which are quite contrary to those drawn by Hobbes.

Having thus proved that human nature is not purely selfish and is not governed wholly by the tamas quality, nor totally ungodly (as has been maintained by the English writer Hobbes and the French writer Helvetius), and that a benevolent (sāttvika) mental impulse forms part of human nature from birth along with the selfish impulse, and that doing good to others is not long-sighted selfishness, one has to give equal importance to the two principles of 'svārtha', i.e.,

one's own happiness and parārtha, i.e., the happiness of others,, in building up the science of the doable and the not-doable (kāryākārya-vyavasthiti). This is the third division of Materialistic philosophers. Nevertheless, the Materialistic view that both svārtha and parārtha deal only with worldly happiness, and that there is nothing beyond worldly happiness, is also held by this school. The only difference is that people' who belong to this school consider it their duty to take into- account both self-interest (svārtha) and other's-interest (parārtha) in determining questions of morality, because they look upon the impulse of doing good to others as, as much an inherent impulse, as the selfish impulse. As normally there is no conflict between self-interest and other's-interest, all the Actions which a man performs are primarily also beneficial- to society. If one man accumulates wealth, that ultimately benefits the whole society; because, society being a collection of numerous individuals, if each individual in it benefits himself without harming others, that is bound to benefit the whole society. Therefore, this school of philosophers has laid down that if one can do good to others without neglecting one's own happiness, it is one's duty to do so. But, as this school does not admit the superiority of other's-interest and advises that one should each time, according to one's own lights, consider whether one's own interests or the interests of others- are superior, it is difficult

to decide to what extent one should sacrifice one's own happiness for the happiness of others when there is a conflict between self-interest and other's-interest,. and there is very often a chance of a man falling a prey to considerations of his own interests. For instance, if self-interest is considered to be as important as other's-interest, it is difficult to decide by reference to the doctrines of this school of thought, whether or not one should, for the sake of truth,, suffer considerable financial loss – to say nothing of the much more serious question whether or not one should, for the sake- of truth, 'sacrifice one's life or lose one's kingdom. Persons belonging to this school may possibly praise a benevolent man who sacrifices his life for the advantage of another, but if they are themselves faced with a similar situation, these philosophers, who habitually sit on the two stools of self-interest and

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other's-interest, will certainly be dragged towards self-interest. This school believes that they do not look upon other's-interest as a long-sighted variety of selfishness (as was done by Hobbes), but that they minutely weigh self-interest and other's-interest in a scale, and very skillfully decide in what self-interest lies; and, on that account, they glorify their doctrine by calling it the path of 'enlightened' (udātta) or 'wise'

self-interest (but self- interest in any case!) [1] But see what Bhartṛhari says:—

ete satpuruṣāḥ parārthaghatakāḥ svārthān parityajya  
ye |  
sāmānyāstu parārtham udyamabhṛtaḥ svārthā  
'virodhena ye ||  
te 'mī mānavarākṣasāḥ parahitaṁ svārthāya nighmanti  
ye |  
ye tu ghnanti nirarthakaṁ parahitaṁ te ke na  
jānīmahe || (Nī. Śa. 74)

that is, "those who do good to others, sacrificing their own interests are the truly good persons; those who strive for the good of others, without sacrificing self-interest, are ordinary persons; those who harm others, for their self-interest, must be looked upon not as human beings but as godless beings (rākṣasāḥ); but I do not know how to describe those who are worse than these, that is, those who needlessly harm the interests of others". In the same way in describing the most excellent form of regal morality, Kālidāsa says:—

svasukhanirabhilāṣaḥ khidyase lokahetoḥ |  
pratidinam athavā te vṛttir evaṁ vidhaiva || (Śākuntala  
5.7).

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[1] This is called in English 'enlightened self-interest'. I have translated the word 'enlightened' into Marathi as 'udātta' or 'śahajā'

that is, "you strive every day for the welfare of others without considering your own happiness, or it may be said that such is your natural instinct or vocation". Neither Bhartṛhari nor Kālidāsa had to see how to discriminate between Right Action or Wrong Action (karmākarma) or righteousness and unrighteousness (dharmādharmā) by adopting both the principles of self-interest and other's-interest into a science of Right Action (Karma-Yoga), and judiciously weighing them. Nevertheless,

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the highest place which has been given by them to persons who sacrifice self-interest for other's-interest is justifiable even from the point of view of Ethics. Persons belonging to this school of thought say, that although other's-interest may be superior to self-interest from the philosophical point of view, yet, in as much as we have not to consider what ideally pure morality is, but only how 'ordinary' persons should act in the ordinary affairs of the world, the prominence given by us to 'enlightened self-interest' is proper -from the worldly point of view. [1] But in my opinion, there is no sense in this argument. The weights and measures used in commerce are as a rule

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[1] Sidgwick's Methods of Ethics, Book I, Chap. II, § 2 pp 18 – 29; also Book IV Chap. IV, § 3 p.474. Sidgwick has not invented this third path; but ordinary well-educated English people usually follow this path of morality which is also known as 'Common sense morality'.

more or less inaccurate; but if, taking advantage of that fact, the greatest possible accuracy is not maintained in the standard weights and measures kept in public offices, shall we not blame the persons in authority? The same rule applies to the philosophy of Karma-Yoga. Ethics has been formulated only in order to scientifically define the pure, complete, and constant form of morality; and, if any science of Ethics does not do this, it must be said to be useless. Sidgwick is not wrong in saying that 'enlightened self-interest' is the path of ordinary people. Bhartṛhari says the same thing. But if one examines what the opinion of these ordinary people about the highest morality is, it will be seen that, even in their opinion, the importance given by Sidgwick to enlightened self-interest is wrong, and the path of spotless morality or the path followed by saints, is looked upon by them as something much better than the ordinary selfish path; and, that is what is intended to be conveyed by the stanzas of Bhartṛhari quoted above.

I have so far dealt with the three divisions of the School of Material happiness, namely, the purely selfish, the long-sighted selfish, and the enlightened selfish (which is both the former ones combined), and I have pointed out what the



principal short-comings of their respective systems are. But this does not exhaust all the divisions of the Material happiness school. The next division, that is to say, the best division of this school is the one of the benevolent (sāttvika) Materialistic philosophers, who maintain that: one should decide the ethical doability or non-doability of all Actions by judiciously weighing the Material happiness of not only one human being, hut of the entire human race. [1] It is not possible that one and the same act will cause happiness to all persons in the world or in a society at one and the same time. If one person looks upon a particular thing as productive of happiness, it produces unhappiness to another person. But, just as light is not considered objectionable on the ground that the owl does not like it, so also if a particular thing is not profitable to some persons, it cannot be said, even according to the Karma- Yoga science, that it is not beneficial to all; and on that account, the words 'the happiness of all persons (sarvabhūtahita) have to be understood as meaning the 'greatest happiness (good) of the greatest number'. In short, the opinion of this school is that, "we must consider only such acts as ethically just and fit to be performed, as are conducive to the greatest good of the greatest number; and that, acting in that way is the true duty of every human being in this world." This doctrine of the school of Material happiness is

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[1] Bentham, Mill etc. are the protagonists of this School. I have translated, the words 'greatest good of the greatest number' as the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number', in this book.

acceptable to the Metaphysical school. Nay, I may even say that this principle was propounded by the Metaphysicians in very ancient times, and the Materialistic philosophers have now turned it to use in a particular way. It is a well-known fact, as has been said by the Saint Tukārāma that, "saintly persons come to life only for the benefit of the world; they suffer in body in order to do good to others". Needless to say, there is no dispute about the correctness or the propriety of this principle, Even 'in the Bhagavadgītā, in describing the characteristic features of saints (jñānin) who practice the perfect Yoga – of course, the Karma-Yoga– the words "sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ" i. e., "they are engrossed in doing good to all created beings"

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have been clearly used twice (Gī. 5.25; 12.4); and it becomes—quite clear from the statement from the Mahābhārata quoted in the second chapter above: "yad bhūtahitam atyantam tat satyam iti dhāraṇā". (Vana 208.4), i.e., "that is Truth according to dharma in which the highest benefit of all lives," that our ancient writers used to take into account this principle in deciding what is just (dharma) and what unjust (adharma). But, looking upon the promotion of the welfare of all created beings as the external characteristic feature of the conduct of jñānins, and occasionally making use of that principle in a broad way for determining what is just and what unjust, is

something absolutely different from taking, for granted that that is the substance of Ethics, and disregarding everything else, and erecting an immense structure of the science of Ethics on that foundation alone. Materialistic philosophers accept the latter course and maintain that Ethics has nothing to do with Metaphysics. It is, therefore, necessary for us to see now to what extent they are correct. There is a great deal of difference between the meanings of the two words 'happiness' (sukha) and 'benefit' (hita); but, although for the moment that difference is not taken into consideration and the word 'sarvabhūtahita' is taken as meaning 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number', yet it will be seen, that numerous important difficulties arise, if we rely only on this principle for distinguishing the doable from the not-doable. Suppose, a Materialist follower of this principle was advising. Arjuna: what would he have told him? Would he not have said:— If as a result of your becoming victorious in the Bhāratiya war, you bring about the greatest happiness of the greatest number, then it is your duty to fight, even if you might kill Bhīṣma. Apparently, this advice seems very easy But, if we go a little deeper, we realise its insufficiency and the difficulties involved in it. 'Greatest number' means how much? The Pāṇḍava army was of seven akṣauhiṇīs (a unit for measuring the numbers of soldiers). But, the Kaurava army was of eleven akṣauhiṇīs. Can one, therefore argue that the Pāṇḍavas were in the wrong, on the ground that if the Pāṇḍavas had been defeated these

eleven Kaurava-akṣauhiṇīs would have become happy? To decide questions of

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morality merely on the basis of numbers would be wrong on any number of occasions, to say nothing of the Bhāratīya war. Even in ordinary life everyone believes, that that act which pleases even one good man is more truly a good act than the act which gives happiness to a hundred thousand evil-doers. In order to justify this belief, the happiness of one saint has to be given a higher value than the happiness of a hundred thousand evil-doers, and if one does that, the fundamental principle that 'the greatest external happiness of the greatest number is the only test of morality' becomes, to that extent, weak. One has, therefore, to say that numbers have no fixed bearing on morality. It must also be borne in mind that something which is ordinarily considered as productive of happiness by all persons is, by a far-sighted person, seen to be disadvantageous to all. Take for example the cases of Socrates and Jesus Christ. Both of them were preaching to their countrymen what, in their respective opinions, was ultimately beneficial. But their countrymen denounced them as 'enemies of society', and put them to death. The people, as also their leaders, were acting on the principle of the 'greatest good of the greatest number'; but, we do not now say that what the ordinary people then did was just. In short, even if we for a

moment admit that 'greatest good of the greatest number' is the only fundamental principle of Ethics, yet, we do not thereby solve to any extent the questions, in what lies the happiness of millions of persons, how that has to be ascertained, and by whom. On ordinary occasions, the task of finding this out may be left to those persons whose happiness or unhappiness is under consideration. But, as it is not necessary to go so deep into the matter on ordinary occasions, and, as ordinary persons do not possess the mental grasp to understand and decide faultlessly in what their happiness lies on extraordinary and difficult occasions, putting into the hands of such uneducated persons the solitary ethical principle of 'the greatest good of the greatest number' is like placing a fire-brand into the hands of an evil spirit, as is apparent from the illustrations of the two leaders given above. There is no sense in the repartee: "Our ethical principle is correct; what can we do if ignorant persons have wrongly applied it?" Because, although the

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principle may be correct, one must at the same time explain who are the proper persons to give effect to it, and when and how these persons do so, and other similar limitations of the principle. Otherwise, ordinary people will needlessly indulge in the fond belief that they are as capable of determining

questions of morality as Socrates, and serious consequences are likely to follow.

This theory is open to other objections which are more serious than the two objections: (i) questions of morality cannot be properly decided by reference to numbers alone and (ii) there is no definite external measure for logically proving in what lies the greatest good of the greatest number, which I have mentioned above. For instance, only a little consideration will show that it is very often impossible to fully and satisfactorily decide whether a particular Action is just or unjust by considering merely its external effects. It is true- that we decide whether a particular watch is good or bad, by seeing whether or not it shows correct time; but before applying this rule to human actions, one must bear in mind, that man is not merely a watch or a machine. It is true that all saints strive for the benefit of the world. But we cannot draw the definite converse conclusion that every person who strives for the benefit of the world must be a saint. One must also see what that man's frame of mind is. This is the great difference between a man and a machine; and therefore, if someone commits a crime unintentionally or by mistake, it is legally considered a pardonable offence. In short, we cannot arrive at a correct decision as to whether a particular act is good or bad,, just or unjust, or moral or immoral by considering merely its external result or effect, that is, by considering whether or not that act will produce the greatest good of the greatest

number. One has also necessarily to consider at the same time, the reason, the desire, or the motive of the doer of the act. There was once an occasion to construct a tramway for the benefit and happiness of all the citizens of a big city in America. But there were delays in obtaining the requisite sanction from the proper authorities. Thereupon, the directors of the tramway company gave a bribe to the persons in authority, and the necessary sanction was immediately obtained; and, the

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construction of the tramway being complete soon afterwards,, all the people in the city were in consequence considerably inconvenienced and benefited. Sometime after that, the bribery was found out, and the manager of the tramway was criminally prosecuted. There was no unanimity in the first jury, so a second, jury was empaneled and the second jury having found the manager guilty, he was convicted. In such a case, the principle of the greatest good of the greatest number is useless by itself. The external effect of the bribery, namely, that, the tramway came to be constructed because the bribe was given, was the greatest good of the greatest number yet, on that account, the fact that the bribe was given does not

become legal. [1] Though the external effects of the two several acts of giving in charity desirelessly in the belief, that it is one's duty to do so (dātavyam), and of giving in charity for the sake of reputation or for some other purpose are the same, yet, even the Bhagavadgītā distinguishes between, the two by saying, that the first gift is sātत्वika (benevolent) and that the second gift is rājasa (desire-prompted) (Gī. 17.20 – 23); and the same gift, if made to an unworthy person is said to be tāmasa and objectionable. Even ordinary people consider a poor man's giving a few pies for a charitable: purpose as of the same moral value, as the gift of a hundred rupees by a rich man. But, if the matter be considered by an external test like 'the greatest good of the greatest number', we will have to say that these two gifts are not of the same moral value. The great drawback of the Materialistic ethical principle of the 'greatest good of the greatest number' is, that, it does not attach any importance to the motive or the reason, of the doer, and if one says that the inner motive has to be taken into account, then the fundamental condition of the greatest external good of the greatest number being the only test of morality is not satisfied. As the Legislative Council or Assembly is a collection of many individuals, it is not necessary to ascertain what the state of their conscience was, when we consider whether or not the laws made by them are proper; and it is enough if one considers only the external

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[1] This illustration is taken from the book, The Ethical Problem of Dr. Paul Carus, (pp. 58 and 69, 2nd Edition).



aspect of the laws, namely, whether or not the greatest good of the greatest number will result from them. But, as will be clear from the illustrations given above, the same test does not apply to other oases. I do not say that the principle of 'the greatest good or happiness of the greatest number' is utterly useless. One cannot have a more excellent principle for considering external matters; but in considering whether a particular thing is morally just or unjust, it is very often necessary to consider several other things besides this external principle; and therefore, one cannot safely depend on this principle alone for determining questions of morality; and all that I say is, that it is necessary to ascertain and fix upon some principle, more definite and faultless than this. The same moral is conveyed by the statement: "The Reason (buddhi) is of greater importance than the Action" (Gī. 2.49), made in the very beginning of the Gītā. If one considers only the external Action, it is often misleading. It is not impossible for a man to be subject to excessive anger, notwithstanding that he continues to perform his external Actions of religious austerities. But on the other hand, if the heart is pure, the external act becomes immaterial, and the religious or moral value of an insignificant external act like the giving of dried boiled rice by Sudāmā to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is considered by people to be as great as the public distribution of tons of food, which will

give great happiness to a great number. Therefore, the well-known German philosopher Kant [1] has treated the weighing of the external and visible effects of an act as of minor importance and has started his exposition of Ethics with a consideration of the purity of mind of the doer. It is not that this shortcoming of the Materialistic theory of happiness was not noticed by the principal supporters of that theory. Hume has clearly said that in as much as the acts of a person are considered a test of his morality as being the index of his disposition, it is impossible to decide that they are praiseworthy or unworthy merely from their external effects; [2] and even Mill

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accepts the position that 'the morality of any act depends entirely upon the motive of the doer, that is to say, upon the reasoning on which he bases that act.' But, in order to support his own point of view, Mill has added a rider to this principle that, 'so long as the external act is the same, its moral value

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[1] Kant's Theory of Ethics (Tran, by Abbott) 6th Ed. p.6 )

[2] "For as actions are objects of our moral sentiment, so far only as they are indications of the internal character passions, and affections, it is impossible that they can give rise either to praise or blame, where they proceed not from these principles but are derived altogether from external objects". Hume's Inquiry concerning Human Understanding. Section VIII Part II (p. 368 of Hume's Essays. The World Library Edition).

remains the same, whatever may have been .the desire which prompted it'. [1] This argument of Mill is only doctrinal.

Because, if the Reason (buddhi) is different, then, though two acts may be the same in appearance, yet they can never have the same value essentially. And Green, therefore, objects that the limitation: 'so long as there is no difference in the (external) act' etc. laid down by Mill, itself falls to the ground.

[2] The same is the opinion expressed in the Gītā. Because, the Gītā says that even if two persons have given the same amounts for the same charitable purpose – that is, even when their external act is just the same – it is possible that one gift will be sāttvika, and the other one will be rājasa or even tāmāsa if the two persons have different reasons for the gift. But I shall deal in greater detail with this question later on, when I compare the Eastern and the Western opinions in the matter. All that I have to prove at the moment is, that even this refined form of the Materialistic theory of happiness, – which depends only on the external results of an Action – falls short on the mark in determining questions of morality; and Mill's admission quoted above is, in my opinion, the best possible proof of that fact.

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[1] 'Morality of the action depends entirely upon the intention, that is, upon what the agent mils to do'. But the motive, that is, the feeling which makes him will so to do, when it makes no difference in the act, makes none in the morality. " Mill's Utilitarianism p. 39 (27 ?).

[2] Green's 'Prolegomena to Ethics' § 292. Note. p. 348 (5th Cheaper Ed.).

The greatest drawback of the theory of 'the greatest good of the greatest number' is that it does not take into consideration the Reason (buddhi) of the doer. Because, the writings of Mill himself show that, even if his arguments are accepted, this principle of determining questions of morality merely by external results, is applicable only within specified limits, that is, is one-sided, and cannot be equally applied to all cases. But, there is a further objection to this theory, namely that, as the entire argument of the theory has been developed on the basis that other's-interest is superior to self-interest, without explaining why or how it is so, the theory of 'enlightened self-interest' gets a chance of pushing itself forward. If both self-interest and other's-interest have come into existence with man, why should one look upon the good of the greatest number as more important than one's own interest? The answer, that other's interest should be protected because it involves the greatest good of the greatest number is not satisfactory; because the question itself is why I should bring about the greatest good of the greatest number. It is true that this question does not always arise, since one's interest, as a general rule, lies in promoting the interests of others. But, the difference between this last and fourth stage of the Materialistic theory of happiness and its- third stage is, that the followers of this last school believe that where there is a conflict between self-interest and other 's- interest, the duty of

everybody is to sacrifice self-interest and to strive for other's-interest, instead of following the path of 'enlightened self-interest.' Is not some explanation due in support of this particular feature of this Materialistic theory of happiness? As one learned Materialistic philosopher belonging to this school realised this difficulty, he has examined the activities of all living beings, from the minutest organisms to the human race, and come to the conclusion that in as much as the quality of maintaining one's own progeny or community just as one maintains oneself, and of helping one's fellows as much as possible without harming any one, is to be seen being gradually more and more developed from the stage of minute organisms to the human race, we must say that that is the principle feature of the mode of life of the living world.

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This feature is firstly noticed in the living world in the production of progeny and protecting it. In those minute organisms in which the difference of the sexes has not been developed, the body of one organism is seen to grow until it breaks into two organisms; or, it may even be said, that this minute organism sacrifices its own life for the sake of its progeny, that is to say, for the sake of another. In the same way, animals of both sexes in grades of life higher than that of these organisms, are seen to willingly sacrifice their own interests in the living world for the maintenance of their

progeny; and this quality is seen to be always growing; so-  
that, even in the most aboriginal societies, man is seen  
willingly helping, not only his own progeny, but also his tribe;  
and therefore, the highest duty in this world of man, who is  
the crown jewel of the living world, is to attempt to  
permanently do away with the present apparent conflict  
between self-interest and other's-interest by further  
developing this tendency of created beings of finding  
happiness in other's-interest as if it was self-interest, which is  
observed to become stronger and stronger in the rising grades  
of creation. [1] This argument is correct. There is nothing new  
in the principle that, as the virtue of philanthropy is to be seen  
even in the dumb world, in the shape of protection of progeny,  
it is the highest duty of enlightened man to carry that virtue to  
its perfection. Only, as the knowledge of the material sciences  
has now considerably increased, it is now possible to develop  
more systematically the Materialistic demonstration of this  
principle. Although the point of view of our philosophers was  
Metaphysical,, yet, it has been stated in our ancient treatises  
that:

aṣṭādaśa purāṇānām sārām sārām samuddhṛtam I  
paropakāraḥ puṇyāya pāpāya parapiḍanam II

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[1] This argument is to be found in the Data of Ethics written by Spencer. Spencer has explained the difference between his opinions and the opinions of Mill in his letters to Mill, and this book contains extracts from this correspondence. See pp 57 and 123. Also see Bain's Mental and Moral Science, pp. 721 and 722, (Ed. 1875).

that is, "doing good to others is meritorious, and doing harm, to others, sinful; this is the sum and substance of the eighteen

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Purāṇas"; and, even Bhartṛhari says that: "svārtho yasya parārtha eva sa pumān ekaḥ satām agrāṇī", i.e., "that man with whom other's-interest has become self-interest is the best of good men". But, when we consider the scale of life gradually rising from the minutest organisms to the human race, another question also arises, namely: is the virtue of philanthropy the only virtue which has been fully developed in the human race, or have other benevolent (sāttvika) virtues, such as justice, kindness, wisdom, far-sightedness, logic, courage, perseverance, forgiveness, control of the organs, etc., also been developed in man? When one thinks of this, one has to say that all virtues have been more fully developed in the human race than in any other living being. We will for the present refer to this aggregate of sāttvika qualities as 'humanness'. When in this way 'humanness' is seen to be superior to philanthropy, one has, in determining the propriety or impropriety or the morality of any particular Action, to examine that Action from the point of view of its 'humanness' – that is, from the point of view of all those various qualities which are seen to be more developed in the human race than in other living beings– rather than from the point of view of its philanthropical-ness. We must, therefore, come to the

conclusion, that it is better to call that Action alone virtuous, or to say that that alone is morality, which will enhance the state of being human or the 'humanness', of all human beings, or which will be consistent with the dignity of such 'humanness', instead of merely relying on the virtue of philanthropy, and somehow or other getting rid of the matter. And when one accepts this comprehensive view-point, the consideration of 'the greatest good of the greatest number', becomes only an insignificant part of such view-point, and the doctrine that the righteousness or unrighteousness of all Actions has to be tested only by that test falls to the ground, and we see that we have also to take 'humanness' into account. And when one considers minutely in what 'humanness', or 'the state of being human' consists, the question "ātmā va are draṣṭavyaḥ" naturally crops up, as stated by Yājñavalkya. An American writer, who has written an exposition of Ethics, has given this comprehensive quality of 'humanness' the name of 'Ātmā'.

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From what has been stated above, one will see how even the upholders of the theory of Material happiness have to rise from the lowest stage of pure selfishness or pure physical happiness of one's self to the higher stage of philanthropy, and ultimately to that of humanness. But, as even in the idea of humanness, the upholders of the Material happiness theory attach importance solely to the external physical happiness of



all human beings, even this final stage of Materialism, which disregards internal purity and internal happiness, is not flawless in the eyes of our Metaphysicians. Although we may accept in a general way that the whole struggle of mankind is directed towards obtaining happiness or preventing unhappiness, yet, until one has in the first place satisfactorily solved the question as to whether true and permanent happiness is material, that is, lies in the enjoyment of worldly physical pleasure or in something else, one cannot accept as correct any Materialistic theory. Even Materialistic philosophers admit that mental happiness stands on a higher footing than physical happiness. If one promises to a human being all the happiness which it is possible for a beast to enjoy, and asks him whether he is prepared to become a beast, not a single human being will say yes. In the same way, an intelligent person need not be told that that particular peace of mind which results from deep meditation on philosophical problems is a thousand times better than material wealth, or the enjoyment of external pleasures. And even considering the general opinion on the matter, it will be seen that people do not accept as wholly correct the doctrines that morality depends on numbers, that whatever a human being does is for Material happiness, and that Material happiness is the highest ideal of a human being. We believe that the humanness of a human being lies in possessing such an amount of mental control as to be able to sacrifice external happiness and even one's own life in order to act up to such moral principles as

Veracity etc., which are of greater importance than life or external happiness from the Metaphysical point of View; and also- Arjuna had not asked Śrī Kṛṣṇa how much happiness would result to how many persons by his taking part in the war,

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but he had said:– "Tell me in what lies my highest benefit, that is the highest benefit of my Ātman" (Gī. 2.7; 3.2). This constant benefit or happiness of the Ātman lies in the peace (śānti) of the Ātman; and it is stated in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (Br. 2.4.2) that however much of material happiness or wealth one might obtain, there is no hope of obtaining by that alone the happiness or peace of the Ātman – "amṛtatvasya tu nāśasti vittena"; and in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad, it is stated that although Death (Mṛtyu) was ready to bestow on Naciketā, sons, grand-sons, animals, grain, money and other kinds of material wealth, he gave to Mṛtyu the definite reply: "I want the knowledge of the Ātman, I do not want wealth"; and after differentiating between 'preya', i.e., that worldly happiness which is pleasing to the organs, and 'śreya', i.e., the true benefit of the Ātman, it is stated:–

śreyaś ca preyaś ca manusyam etas tau saṁparītya  
vivaṇkti dhīraḥ ।

śreyo hi dhīro 'bhipreyaso vṛṇīte preyo mando  
yogakṣemād vṛṇīte || (Kaṭha. 1.2.2)

that is, "when man is faced with 'preya' (transient external pleasure of the organs) and 'śreya' (true and permanent benefit), He elects between the two. He who is wise prefers śreya to preya, and the weak-minded man prefers preya, that is, external happiness to the benefit of the Ātman". It is, therefore, not correct to believe that the highest goal of man in this world is the physical happiness obtainable through the organs in worldly life and that whatever a man does is done by him merely for the sake of obtaining external, that is, Material happiness or for preventing unhappiness.

Not only is the internal happiness obtainable through Reason, or Metaphysical happiness of greater worth than the external happiness obtained through the medium of the organs, but the physical pleasure which exists to-day comes to an end to-morrow, i.e., is transient. The same is not the case with rules of Ethics. Non-violence, Veracity and other moral principles are looked upon by people as independent of external

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circumstances, that is, of external happiness or unhappiness and as being constant in their application at all times and in all circumstances, that is to say, they are looked upon as

permanent by everybody. Materialism cannot satisfactorily explain the reason why moral principles have this permanence which does not depend on external matters, nor how it comes into existence. For, whatever general doctrine is laid down by reference to happiness or unhappiness in the external world, yet, in as much as all happiness or unhappiness is inherently transient, all doctrines of morality founded on such a transient foundation are equally weak, i.e., non-permanent; and, on that account, the ever-lasting permanence of the law of Truth seen in one's being ready to sacrifice one's life in the interests of Truth, irrespective of considerations of happiness or unhappiness, cannot be based on the doctrine of the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number'. Some persons advance the argument, that if in ordinary life even responsible persons are seen taking shelter behind falsehood when faced with the problem of sacrificing their lives, and if we see, that in such circumstances even philosophers are not punctilious, then it is not necessary to look upon the religion of Truth etc., as eternal; but this argument is not correct. Because, even those people who have not got the moral courage or do not find it convenient to sacrifice their lives for the sake of Truth, admit by their own mouths the eternal nature of this principle of morality. On this account, in the Mahābhārata, after all she rules of ordinary life which lead to the acquisition of wealth (artha), desires (kāma) etc. have been dealt with, Vyāsa ultimately in the Bhārata-Sāvitṛī, (and also in the Viduranīti), has given to everybody the following advice namely:—

na jātu kāmān na bhayān na lobhād dharmam tyajed  
jīvitasyāpi hetoḥ ।  
dharmo nityaḥ sukhaduḥkhe tv anitye jīvo nityoḥ hetur  
asya tv anityaḥ ॥

(Ma. Bhā. Sva. 5.6; U. 39.13, 13),

that is: "although happiness and unhappiness is transient, yet morality is constant: therefore, one should not abandon moral

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principles, whether for desire of happiness or out of fear, or avarice, or even if life itself is threatened. Life is fundamentally eternal and its objects, such as, happiness, or un. happiness, etc., are transient." And that, therefore, instead of wasting time in thinking of transient happiness or unhappiness, one should link eternal life with eternal religion. In order to see how far this advice of Vyāsa is correct, we have now to consider the true nature of happiness and unhappiness and to see what permanent happiness is.

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# CHAPTER V.

## THE CONSIDERATION OF HAPPINESS AND UNHAPPINESS

### (SUKHA-DUHKHA-VIVEKA.)

sukham ātyantikam yat tat buddhigrāhyam atīndriyam । [1]

~ Gītā. (6.21)

Our philosophers have accepted the position that every human being in this world is continually struggling in order to obtain happiness, or to increase the amount of happiness which he has obtained, or to obviate or reduce his unhappiness. In the Śāntiparva, Bhṛgu says the Bhāradvāja (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 190. 9) that: "iha khalu amumiś ca loka vastupravṛttayaḥ sukhartham abhidhīyante । na hy ataḥparaṁ trivargaphalaṁ viśiṣṭataram asti ।", i.e., "in this world or elsewhere, all activity is for obtaining happiness, there is no other goal except this for dharma, artha, or kāma" But, our philosophers say, though a man is suddenly seized by the hand of death, while he is

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[1] "That happiness is the most beatific happiness which being obtainable only by means of Reason (buddhi). is independent of the organs (indriyam)."

grabbing a false coin in the belief that it is true because he does not understand in what true happiness lies, or while he is spending his life in the hope that happiness will come sometime or other, his neighbour does, not become any the wiser on that account, and follows the same mode of life; and the cycle of life goes on in this way, nobody troubling to think in what true and permanent happiness lies. There is a great deal of difference between the opinions of Eastern and Western philosophers as to whether life consists only of unhappiness, or is principally happy or principally unhappy. Nevertheless, there is no difference of opinion about the fact that whichever position is accepted, the advantage of a man lies in obtaining the highest measure of happiness by preventing unhappiness to the greatest possible extent. The words 'hitam' (advantage), or 'śreyas' (merit), or 'kalyāṇam' (benefit) are ordinarily more often used than the word 'sukham' (happiness); and I shall later on explain what the difference between them is. Yet, if one takes for granted that the word 'happiness' includes all kinds of benefits, then the

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proposition that ordinarily every human being strives to obtain happiness may be said to be generally accepted. But, on that account, the definitions of pain and happiness given in the Parāśaragītā included in the Mahābhārata, (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 295. 27) namely: "yad iṣṭam tat sukham prāhuḥ dveṣyam duḥkham

ihēṣyate", i.e., "that which is desired by us is happiness, and that which we dislike, or which we do not desire is unhappiness", do not become entirely faultless from the philosophical point of view. Because, the word 'iṣṭa' in this definition can also be interpreted to mean 'a desirable thing or object'; and if that meaning is accepted, one will have to refer to a desirable object as 'happiness'. For example, although we might desire water when we are thirsty, yet water, which is an external object, cannot be called 'happiness'. If that were so, one will have to say that a person who is frowned in the waters of a river, has been drowned in happiness! That organic satisfaction which results from the drinking of water is happiness. It is true that men desire this satisfaction of the organs or this happiness, but we cannot, on that account, lay down the broad proposition, that all that is desirable must be happiness. Therefore, the Nyāya school has given the two definitions: "anukūlavedanīyaṃ sukham", i.e., "desirable suffering is "happiness", and "pratikūlavedanīyaṃ duḥkham", i.e., "undesirable suffering is unhappiness", and it has treated both pain and "happiness as some kind of suffering. As these sufferings are fundamental, that is to say, as they start from the moment of birth, and as they can be realised only by experience, it is not possible to give better definitions of pain or happiness than these given by the Nyāya school. It is not that these sufferings in the shape of pain and happiness result only from human activity; but, sometimes the anger of deities gives rise to intractable diseases, and men have to suffer the



resulting unhappiness; therefore, in treatises on Vedānta, this pain and "happiness is usually divided into 'ādhidaivika' (god-given), 'ādhibhautika' (physical), and 'ādhyātmika' (metaphysical). Out of these, that pain or happiness which we suffer as a result of the blessings or the anger of deities is known as 'ādhidaivika', and that pain or happiness, in the shape of warmth or cold, which results from the contact of the human organs with the

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external objects in the world composed of the five primordial elements (such as the earth etc.), is called 'ādhibhautika'; and all pain and happiness which arises without any such external contact, is called 'ādhyātmika'. When this classification of pain and happiness is accepted, pain, like fever etc., when it results from the disturbance of the internal ratio of wind, bile etc. in the body, and the peaceful health, which results from that internal ratio being correct, fall into the category of Metaphysical (ādhyātmika,) pain and happiness. Because, although this pain and happiness is bodily, that is to say, although it pertains to the gross body made up of the five primordial elements, yet, we cannot always say that it is due to the contact of the body with external objects. And therefore, even Metaphysical pain and happiness have, according to Vedānta philosophy, to be further sub-divided into bodily-metaphysical, and mental-metaphysical pain and happiness.

But, if pain and happiness is, in this way further divided into bodily and mental divisions, it is no more necessary to recognise the ādhidaivika pain and happiness as a distinct class. Because, as is clear, the pain or happiness which arises as a result of the blessings or the anger of deities, has ultimately to be borne by man through his body or through his mind. I have, therefore, not followed the three-fold division of pain and happiness made in Vedānta terminology, but have adopted only the two divisions, external or bodily (bāhya or śārīr), and internal or mental (abhyantara or mānasika); and I have in this book called all bodily pain and happiness 'ādhibhautika' (physical) and all mental pain and happiness 'ādhyātmika' (Metaphysical). I have not made a third division of ādhidaivika (god-given) pain and happiness, as has been done in books on Vedānta philosophy, because, in my opinion, this two-fold classification is more convenient for dealing scientifically with the question of pain and happiness; and this difference between the Vedānta terminology and my terminology must be continually borne in mind in reading the following pages.

Whether we look upon pain and happiness as of two kinds or of three kinds, nobody wants pain; therefore, it is stated both in the Vedānta and the Sāṃkhya philosophies (Sāṃ. Kā. 1: Gī. 6.21, 22), that preventing every kind of pain to the greatest possible extent, and obtaining the utter-

most and the permanent happiness is the highest goal of man. When in this way, the uttermost happiness has become to highest goal of man, we have naturally to consider the questions: what is to be called the uttermost, the real, and the permanent happiness, whether or not it is possible to obtain it, and if so, when and how it can be obtained etc.; and when you begin to consider these questions, the next question which arises is, whether pain and happiness are two independent and different kinds of sufferings, experiences, or things, as defined by the Nyāya School, or whether the absence of the one can be referred to as the other, on the principle that 'that which is not light, is darkness'. After saying that: "When our mouth becomes dry on account of thirst, we drink sweet water in order to remove that unhappiness; when we suffer on account of hunger, we eat nice food in order to alleviate that suffering; and, when the sexual desire is roused and becomes unbearable, we satisfy it by sexual intercourse with a woman"; Bhartṛhari in the last line of the stanza says:—

pratīkāro vyādheḥ sukham iti viparyasyati janaḥ ।

that is, "when any disease or unhappiness has befallen you, the removal of it is, by confusion of thought, referred to as 'happiness'"! There is no such independent thing as happiness which goes beyond the removal of unhappiness. It is not that this rule applies only to the selfish activities of men. I have in

the last chapter referred to the opinion of Ānandagiri, that even in the matter of doing good to others, the feeling of pity invoked in our hearts on seeing the unhappiness of another becomes unbearable to us, and we do the good to others only in order to remove this our suffering in the shape of our being unable to bear it. If we accept this position, we will have to accept as correct the definitions of pain and happiness given in Mahābhārata in one place,, namely:–

tr̥ṣṇārtiprabhavaṁ duḥkhaṁ duḥkhārtiprabhavaṁ  
sukham | (Śān. 25. 22; 174. 19).

that is, "some Thirst first comes into existence; on account of the suffering caused by that Thirst, unhappiness comes

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into existence; and from the suffering caused by that unhappiness, happiness subsequently follows". In short, according to these philosophers, when some Hope, Desire, or, Thirst has first entered the human mind, man thereby begins to suffer pain, and the removal of that pain is called happiness;; happiness is not some independent thing. Nay, this school has even gone further and drawn further inferences that all, the tendencies of human life are Desire-impelled or Thirst-prompted; that Thirst cannot be entirely uprooted, unless all the activities of worldly life are abandoned; and that, unless Thirst is entirely uprooted, true and permanent

happiness, cannot be obtained. This path has been advocated as an alternative path in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka (Bṛ. 4.4.22; Ve. Sū. 3.4.15); and in the Jābāla, Saṁnyāsa and other Upaniṣads, it has been advocated as the principal path. This idea has also been adopted in the Aṣṭāvakra-gītā (9.8; 10.3 – 8) and in the Avadhūta-gītā (3.46). The ultimate doctrine of this school is that the man who desires to obtain the highest happiness or Release, must give up worldly life as early as possible, and follow the path of Renunciation (saṁnyāsa)' and the path of the Abandonment of the Actions which have been prescribed by the Śrutis and the Smṛtis (śrauta-smārta-karma-saṁnyāsa), described in the Smṛti treatises, and which was established in the Kali era by Śrī Śaṁkarācārya is based on this principle. If there is no such real thing as happiness, and, if whatever is, is unhappiness, and that too based on Thirst, then it is clear, that all the bother of self-interest or other's-interest will be obviated and the fundamental equable frame of mind (śānti) will be the only thing to remain, when these diseases in the shape of Thirst etc. are in the first place entirely uprooted; and for this reason, it is stated in the Piṅgalagītā in the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata, as also in the Mankigītā, that .—

yac ca kāmasukhaṁ loke yac ca divyaṁ mahat sukham

|

tr̥ṣṇākṣayasukhasyaite nārhaṭaḥ ṣodaśīm kalām || (Śān.  
174.48; 177.49)

i.e., "that happiness which is experienced in this world, by the satisfaction of desires (kāma), as also the greater happiness

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which is to be found in heaven, are neither worth even one-sixteenth of the happiness which results from the destruction of Thirst". The Jain and the Buddhistic religions have later on copied the Vedic path of Renunciation; and therefore. in the religious treatises of both these religions, the evil effects and discardability of Thirst have been described as above, or possibly in even more forcible terms. (For example, see the *Tṛṣṇāvagga* in the *Dhammapada*). In the treatises of the Buddhistic religion to be found in Tibet, it is even stated that the above-mentioned stanza from the *Mahābhārata* was uttered by Gautama Buddha when he attained the Buddha-hood. [1]

It is not that the above-mentioned evil effects of Thirst have not been acknowledged by the *Bhagavadgītā*. But, as the doctrine of the *Gītā* is that the total abandonment of Action is

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[1] See Rockhill's *Life of Buddha*, p. 33. This stanza has appeared in the Pali book called *Udāna* (2.2); but, it is not stated there that it was uttered by Buddha when he attained the 'Buddha-hood', from which it can be clearly seen that these stanza could not have been originally uttered by Buddha.

not the proper course for obviating those evil effects, it is necessary to consider here somewhat minutely the above explanation of the nature of pain and happiness. We cannot, in the first place, accept as totally correct the dictum of the Saṁnyāsa school, that all happiness arises from the preventing of pain, such as Thirst etc. Wishing to experience again something, which one has once experienced (seen, heard, etc.) is known as Desire (kāma, vāsanā, or icchā). When this desire becomes stronger as a result of the pain due to one's not obtaining soon enough the desired object, or when the obtained happiness being felt to be insufficient, one wants more and more of it, this desire becomes a Thirst (tṛṣṇā). But if Desire is satisfied before it has grown into Thirst, we cannot say that the resulting happiness arises from the removal of the unhappiness of Thirst. For instance, if we take the case of the food which we get every day at a stated time, it is not our experience that we feel unhappiness every day before taking food. If we do not get food at the proper time, we will suffer unhappiness as a result of hunger, but not otherwise. But

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even if we do not in this way distinguish between Thirst and Desire, and say that both are synonymous, the doctrine that the root of all happiness is Thirst is seen to be incorrect. For instance, if we suddenly put a piece of sugar-candy into the mouth of a child, the happiness which it experiences cannot be

said to have resulted from the destruction of a previous Thirst. Similarly, if while walking along the road, one comes across a beautiful garden and hears the melodious notes of a cuckoo, or coming across a temple on the way, one sees in it the beautiful image of the deity, one thereby experiences happiness, though there had been no previous desire of obtaining those particular objects. If we think over these illustrations, we have to- abandon the above-mentioned definition of happiness of the Saṁnyāsa school, and say that our organs have an inherent, capacity for feeding on good or bad objects, and that when they are in that way carrying on their various activities, they come into contact sometimes with a desirable and sometimes, an undesirable object, and we, thereupon, experience either pain or happiness, without having had any previous Desire or Thirst for it. With this purport in mind, it is stated in the Gītā (Gī. 2. 14), that pain and happiness arise as a result of 'mātrāsparśa', that is, of contact with cold or warm objects etc. The external objects in the world are technically known as 'mātrā', and the above statement in the Gītā means- that the contact (sparśa), i.e., the union of these external objects with our organs results in the suffering (vedanā) of pain or happiness. That is also the doctrine of the science of Karma-Yoga. Nobody can satisfactorily explain why a harsh sound is undesirable to the ear, or why a sweet drink is pleasurable to the tongue, or why the light of the full moon is pleasing to the eyes. All that we know is that when the tongue gets a sweet liquid to taste, it is



satisfied. As Material Happiness is, by its very nature, wholly dependent on the organs, happiness is very often experienced by merely carrying on the particular activities of the organs, whatever the ultimate result of our doing so may be. For instance, the words which sometimes naturally escape our lips when some idea enters our mind, are not uttered by us with the idea of acquainting someone else

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with our thoughts. On the other hand, there is sometimes even a risk of some hidden design or scheme in our minds being divulged by these automatic activities of the organs, and of our being thereby harmed. When little children first learn to walk, they aimlessly walk about the whole day, because they - then experience happiness by the mere act of walking. Therefore, the Blessed Lord, instead of saying that all happiness consists of the absence of unhappiness, says that – "indriyasyendriyasyārthe rāga dveṣau vyavasthitau" (Gī. 3.34), i.e., the attraction and repulsion which exists between the organs of the sense on the one hand, and their relative objects, such as, sound, touch, etc., on the other hand, are both 'vyavasthita', i.e., fundamentally self-existing; and His advice is that all that we have to see is how these activities will become beneficial or can be made by us beneficial to our Ātman; and that therefore, instead of attempting to destroy the natural impulses of the mind, or of the organs, we should

keep our mind and organs under control in order that those impulses should be beneficial to us, and not let the impulses get out of control. This advice, and saying that one should destroy Thirst and along with Thirst all other mental impulses, are two diametrically opposite things. The message of the Gītā is not that one should do away with all activity or prowess in the world; but, on the other hand, it is stated in the 18th Chapter of the Gītā (18.26) that the doer must, side by side with equability of mind, possess the qualities of perseverance and enthusiasm. But we will deal with this matter in greater detail later on. All that we have to see for the present is whether pain and happiness are two independent states of mind or whether one of them is merely the absence of the other; and what the opinion of the Bhagavadgītā on this matter is will be easily understood by my readers from what has been stated above. Not only have 'sukham' (happiness) and 'duḥkham' (pain) been independently dealt with in describing what the 'kṣetra' (field) is (Gī. 13.6), but (Gī. 14.6,7), Happiness is said to be the sign of sattvam (purity) and Thirst of rajas (passion), and sattvam and rajas are considered two independent qualities. From this also it is clear, that pain and happiness have, in the Bhagavadgītā, been considered as

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two mutually opposite and distinct frames of mind. The fact that the Gītā looks upon rājasa-tyāga (abandonment based on

passion) as inferior , as is shown by the words: "One does not derive the result of Abandonment by abandoning some Action on the ground that it leads to unhappiness; for such an abandonment is rājasa " (Gī. 18.1), also refutes the doctrine that all happiness is based on the destruction of Thirst.

Even if we believe that happiness does not consist of the destruction of Thirst or of the absence of unhappiness, and that happiness and unhappiness are two independent things yet, in as much as both these sufferings are mutually opposite or contrary to each other, we are next faced with the question whether it is possible for a man to experience the pleasure of happiness, if he has never suffered unhappiness. Some philosophers say that unless unhappiness has in the first instance been experienced, it is impossible to realise the pleasure of happiness. Others, on the other hand, pointing at the perpetual happiness enjoyed by deities in heaven, say that previous experience of unhappiness is not at all necessary for realising the pleasure of happiness. One can experience the sweetness of honey, jaugery, sugar, the mango-fruit or the plantain before having previously tasted any saltish object. In the same way, since happiness also is of various kinds, one can, without any previous experience of unhappiness, experience perpetual happiness without getting tired of it, by enjoying in succession diverse kinds of happiness, e. g., by moving from a mattress of cotton on to a mattress of feathers, or from a fixed palanquin to the more comfortable swinging

palanquin. But, if one considers the ordinary course of life in this world, it will be seen that all this argument is useless. As the Purāṇas show cases of even gods coming into difficulties, and as even heavenly happiness comes to an end after one's acquired merit has been exhausted in due course of time, the illustration of heavenly happiness is not appropriate; and even if it were appropriate, what use is the illustration of heavenly happiness to us? Although we may believe that: "nityam eva sukham svarge", i.e., "in heaven there is permanent happiness", yet, it is stated immediately afterwards that:—

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"sukham duḥkham ihobhayam" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 190. 14), i.e., "in this world, pain is mixed with happiness"; and consistently with that position even Rāmdāsa Svāmi has described his own personal experience as follows: "Who is there in this world who is wholly happy ? Consult your mind, search and see". And, as is actually experienced by us in this life, we have also to admit the correctness of the following advice given by Draupadī to Satyabhāmā, namely:—

sukham sukhenaha na jātu labhyaṁ  
duḥkhena sādhvī labhate sukhāṁ । (Ma. Bhā. Vana.  
233.4)

that is, "happiness never comes out of happiness; in order that a saintly woman should experience happiness, she must suffer

unhappiness or trouble". Because, though a fruit may be placed on your lips, you have still to take the trouble of pushing it into the mouth, and if it falls into your mouth, you have still to take the trouble of chewing it. At any rate, this much is unquestionable, that there is a world of difference between the sweetness of the happiness which comes after unhappiness, and the sweetness of the happiness which is experienced by a man who is always engrossed in the enjoyment of the objects of pleasure. Because, by continually enjoying happiness, the keenness of the appreciative power of the organs which enjoy the happiness is dulled, and as is well-known:—

prāyeṇa śrīmatām loke bhoktuṁ śaktir na vidyate ।

kāṣṭhāny api hi jīryante daridrāṇām ca sarvaśaḥ ॥ (Ma.  
Bhā.. Śān. 28.59)

that is, "rich people do very often not have even the power of enjoying tasteful food, and poor people can appreciate and digest even uncooked wood". Therefore, in considering worldly life, it is useless to consider further whether it is possible to enjoy continual happiness without unhappiness, "sukhasyānantaram duḥkham duḥkhasyānantaram sukham" (Vana, 260.40; Śān. 25.23), i.e., "unhappiness follows on the steps of happiness, and similarly happiness comes in the wake of

unhappiness", or as has been described by Kālidāsa in the Meghadūta:—

kasyaikāntaṁ sukham upanataṁ duḥkham ekānato vā

|

nīcāir gacchaty upari ca daśā cakranemikrameṇa ||

that is, "no one experiences continual happiness or continual unhappiness; pain and happiness always move alternately up-and down like the points on the circumference of a wheel". Such is the case, whether because this unhappiness has been created in order to increase the sweetness of happiness or because it has some other purpose in the scheme of activity of Matter (prakṛti). It may not be quite impossible to continually obtain one object of pleasure after another, without getting tired of enjoyment; but it is absolutely impossible, at any rate in this karma-bhūmi, i.e., world of Action (destiny?) to- totally abolish unhappiness and continually experience nothing but happiness.

If worldly life does not consist only of happiness, but is always a mixture of pain and happiness, the third question which naturally arises in due course is, whether there is more of happiness or of unhappiness in life. Many Western philosophers, who look upon Material Happiness as the highest, goal of life say, that if there were more of pain than of happiness in life, many, if not all, persons would not have

troubled to live worldly life, but would have committed suicide. But, in as much as man does not seem to be tired of living, he must be experiencing more of happiness than of unhappiness- in life, and therefore, happiness must be looked upon as the highest goal of man, and the question of morality and immorality must also be solved by that standard. But, making suicide depend in this way on worldly happiness is not, really speaking, correct. It is true that sometimes a man, getting tired of life, commits suicide; but people look upon him as an exception, that is, as a lunatic. From this it is seen that ordinarily people do not connect committing or not committing suicide with worldly happiness, but look upon it as an independent thing by itself; and, the same inference follows if one considers the life of an aborigine, which would be looked upon as extremely arduous by civilised persons. The well-known biologist Charles Darwin, while describing in his

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"Travels the aboriginals he came across in the extreme south of South America says, that these aboriginals, men and women, remain without clothes all the year round, even in their extremely cold country; and, as they do not store food, they have for days together to remain without food; yet, their numbers are continually increasing. [1] But, from the fact that

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[1] Darwin's Naturalist's Voyage round the World, Chap. X.

these aboriginies do not commit suicide, no one draws the inference that their mode of life is full of happiness. It is true that they do not commit suicide; but if one minutely considers why that is so, one will see that each one of these persons is filled with extreme happiness by the idea that "I am a human being and not a beast"; and he considers the happiness of being a human being so much greater than all other happiness, that he is never prepared to lose this superior happiness of being a man, however arduous his life may be. Not only does man not commit suicide, but even birds or .beasts do not do so. But can one, on that account, say that their life is full of happiness? Therefore, our philosophers say, that instead of drawing the mistaken inference that the life of a man or of a bird or beast is full of happiness from the fact that they do not commit suicide, the only true inference which can be drawn from that fact is that: what- ever the nature of a man's life, he does not set much store by it, but believes that an incomparable happiness lies in having become a living being (sacetana) from a lifeless being (acetana), and more than anything else, in having become .a man. It is on that basis that the following rising grades have been described in the Śāstras:—

bhūtanām prāṇinaḥ śreṣṭhāḥ prāṇinām buddhijīvināḥ  
buddhimatsu narāḥ śreṣṭhā nareṣu brāhmaṇāḥ smṛtāḥ

॥

brāhmaṇeṣu ca vidvāmsaḥ vidvatsu kṛtabuddhayaḥ ।



kṛtabuddhiṣu kartāraḥ kartṛṣu brahmavādinah ||

(Manu. 1. 96. 97; Ma. Bhā. Udyo. 5.1 and 2).

that is, "the living being is superior to the dead; the intelligent are superior among the living; men are superior among the intelligent; Brahmins, among men; learned Brahmins among Brahmins; doers, among the enlightened-minded, and

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brahmavādin (those who belong to the cult of the Brahman),, among the doers "; and on the same basis, it is stated in vernacular treatises, that out of the 84 lakhs of forms of life (yoni), the human life is the most superior; that among men, he who desires Release (mumukṣu) is most superior; and, that among mumukṣus, the perfect (siddha) is the most superior. That is also the purport of the proverb "life is dearer than anything, else", (sabase jīva pyāra); and for this very reason, if someone commits suicide, finding life full of unhappiness, people look upon him as insane, and the religious treatises count him as a sinner (Ma. Bhā. Karṇa. 70.28); and an attempt to commit, suicide is looked upon as a crime by law. When in this way it has been proved that one cannot, from the fact that a man does not commit suicide, properly draw the conclusion that, life is full of happiness, we must, in deciding the question, whether life is full of happiness or unhappiness, keep aside for the time being the natural blessing of having been born a

human being on account of previous destiny, and consider only the events of the post-natal worldly life. The fact that man does not commit suicide or continues to live is accounted: for by the Energetic principle of life; it is not any proof of the preponderance of happiness in worldly life as stated by Materialistic philosophers. Or, saying the same thing in other words, we must say that the desire not to commit suicide is a natural desire; that this desire does not arise as a result of the weighing of the happiness and unhappiness in life; and that therefore, one cannot from that fact draw the conclusion that life is full of happiness.

When in this way we do not, by confusion of thought, mix up the blessing of being born a human being with the nature of his subsequent life, and recognise 'being a human being' and 'the ordinary life or the usual activities of men' as two distinct things, there remain no other means for deciding, the question whether there is more of happiness or of unhappiness in worldly life for the being which has taken the superior human form, than considering how many of the 'present' desires of every man are satisfied and how many disappointed. The reason for saying 'present' desires is that, those things which have become available to all persons in.

civilised life, become every-day happenings, and we forget the happiness they produce; and we decide the question of the happiness or unhappiness of worldly life by considering only how many of the things, which have newly become necessities, are obtained by us. There is a world of difference between (i) comparing the means of happiness which are available to us to-day with how many of them were available to us a hundred years ago, and (ii) considering whether or not I am happy to-day. For instance, anybody will admit that the present-day travelling by train is much more comfortable than travelling "by bullock-cart, which was in vogue a hundred years ago. But we have now forgotten this happiness of train-travel, and we are unhappy only if someday a train gets late, and we receive our mail late. And therefore, the 'present' happiness or unhappiness of man is usually considered by thinking of his present needs and disregarding all the means of happiness which have already become available; and, if we try to consider what these needs are, we see that there is no end of them. If one desire is satisfied to-day, another new desire takes its place to-morrow, and we want to satisfy this new desire; and as human desire is thus always one step ahead of life, man is never free from unhappiness. In this place, we must bear carefully in mind the difference between the two positions that 'all happiness is the destruction of desire' and that 'however much of happiness is obtained, man is still unsatisfied'. Saying that 'all happiness is not the absence of unhappiness, but pain and happiness are two independent

kinds of organic sufferings' is one thing, and that 'one is dissatisfied, because new kinds of happiness are wanted, without taking into account the happiness which may at any time already be part of one's life', is another thing. The first of these two dicta deals with the actual nature of happiness; and the second, with whether or not a man is fully satisfied by the happiness he has obtained. As the desire for objects of pleasure is a continually increasing desire, a man wants to enjoy over and over again the same happiness which he has already enjoyed, though he may not get new kinds of happiness every day, and thus human desire is never controlled. There is a story told of a Roman Emperor named Vitalius that in order

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to experience over and over again the pleasure of eating tasteful food, he used to take medicines for vomiting the food which he had already eaten, and dine several times every day. But the story of the repentant king Yayāti is even more instructive than this. After the king Yayāti had become old as a result of the curse of Śukrācārya, the latter, by a pang of kindness, gave him the option of giving his old age to another person and taking in exchange his youth. Thereupon, he took the youth of his son Puru in exchange for his own oldness, and, "having enjoyed all objects of pleasure for a thousand years, he found by experience that all the objects in the world were

incapable of satisfying the desire for happiness of even one human being; and Vyāsa has stated in the Ādiparva of the Mahābhārata that Yayāti then said:—

na jātu kāmāḥ kāmānām upabhogena śāmyati ।

haviṣā kṛṣṇavartmeva bhūya evāblduardhate ॥ (Ma.  
Bhā. Ā. 75.49)

that is, "by enjoying objects of pleasure, the desire for the objects of pleasure is not satisfied, but on the other hand this desire grows more and more, just as fire burns more and more by sacrificial offerings being thrown into it"; and the same stanza is to be found in the Manu-Smṛti (Manu. 2.94). The inner reason for this is that, notwithstanding the abundance of means of pleasure, the desire for happiness is never quenched only by enjoying happiness, in as much as the hunger of the organs is always on a rising scale, and it has to be restrained in some other way; and this principle has been fully accepted by our religious writers who have in the first place prescribed that everyone must put a restraint on the enjoyment of pleasure. If those who say that enjoyment of objects of pleasure is the highest goal in this world apply their mind to this doctrine which is based on experience, they will easily realise the absurdity of their beliefs. This doctrine of the Vedic religion has also been accepted in the Buddhistic religion and there is a statement in the Buddhistic treatises that the following words came out of the mouth of the king

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named Māndhātā mentioned in the Purāṇas (instead of Yayāti) at the moment of his death:—

na kahāpaṇavassena titti kāmesu vijjati ।  
api dibbesu kāmesu ratim so nādhigacchati ॥  
(Dhammapada, 186 – 187).

that is, "although coins called 'kāṛṣāpaṇa' fall as a shower of rain, there is no satisfaction (titti means tṛpti) of Desire, and the desires of a desirer are not satisfied even by getting the happiness of heaven ". As it is thus impossible that the happiness of enjoying objects of pleasure can ever be considered sufficient, every man thinks that 'I am unhappy', and when this mental frame of mankind is taken into account, then, as stated in the Mahābhārata:—

sukhād bahutaram duḥkham jīvite nāsti saṁśayaḥ ।  
(Śān. 305.6; 330.16).

that is, " in this life (saṁsāra), unhappiness is more than happiness"; or as stated by the Saint Tukārāma: " if you consider happiness, it is as small as a grain; and if you consider unhappiness, it is as big as a mountain (Tukā. Gā. 2986). The same is the doctrine laid down by the writers of the Upaniṣads (Maitryu 1.2 – 4), and it is stated also in the Gītā that the life of man is inconstant and the 'home of unhappiness',. and that life in the world is not lasting and is '

devoid of happiness ' (Gī. 8.15 and 9.3). The same is the opinion of the German philosopher Schopenhauer, and he has made use of a very curious illustration for proving it. He says that we measure the happiness of a man by considering how many of his desires for happiness, out of the total possible desires for happiness, are satisfied; and if the enjoyment of happiness falls short of the desire for happiness, we say that the man is to that extent unhappy. If this ratio is to be explained mathematically we have to divide the enjoyment of happiness by the desire for happiness and show it in the form of a fraction, thus:

$$\frac{\textit{enjoyment of happiness}}{\textit{desire for happiness}}$$

But this is such a queer fraction that its denominator, namely, the desire for happiness, is always increasing in a greater measure than its 'numerator, namely, the enjoyment of happiness; so that,' if this fraction is

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in the beginning  $\frac{1}{2}$  it becomes later on  $\frac{3}{10}$ , that is to say, if the numerator increases three times, the denominator increases, five times, and the fraction becomes more and more incomplete. Thus, it is futile to entertain the hope of a man becoming fully happy. In considering how much there was of happiness in ancient times, we consider only the numerator of

this fraction by itself and do not pay any attention to the fact that the denominator has now increased much more than the numerator. But when we have to consider only whether a human being is happy or unhappy without reference to time, we must consider both the numerator and the denominator; and we see that this fraction will never become complete. That is the sum and substance of the words of Manu: "na jātu kāmāḥ kāmānām" etc. (2.94). As there is no definite instrument like a thermometer for measuring happiness and unhappiness, this mathematical exposition of the mutual ratio of pain and happiness might not be acceptable to some; but if this argument is rejected, there remains no measure for proving that there is a preponderance of happiness in life for man. Therefore, this objection, which applies as much to the question of happiness as of unhappiness, leaves untouched the general proposition in the above discussion, namely, the theorem proved by the uncontrollable growth of the desire for happiness beyond the actual enjoyment of happiness. It is stated in Mahomedan history, that during the Mahomedan rule in Spain, a just and powerful ruler named Abdul Rahiman the third [1] had kept a diary of how he spent his days and from that diary he ultimately found that in a rule of 50 years he had experienced unalloyed happiness only for 14 days; and another writer [2] has stated that if one compares the opinions of ancient and modern philosophers in the world and

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[1] Moors in Spain p. 128 (Story of the Nations series).

[2] Macmillan's Promotion of Happiness p. 26.



especially in Europe, the number of those who say that life is full of happiness is seen to be about the same as of those who say that life is full of unhappiness. If to these numbers we add the numbers of the Indian philosophers, I need not say which way the scale will turn.

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Reading the exposition made above regarding the happiness and unhappiness of worldly life, some follower of the Saṁnyāsa school will retaliate: "although you do not accept the doctrine that there can be no peace unless one gives up all Thirst-prompted Actions on the ground that happiness is not some actual entity, yet, if even according to yourselves, dissatisfaction arises from Thirst and unhappiness later on springs from dissatisfaction, why do you not say that man should give up Thirst and, along with Thirst, all worldly Actions – whether those Actions are for his own good or for the good of others – at any rate for removing this dissatisfaction, and then remain perpetually satisfied?". In the Mahābhārata itself, we find statements like: "asaṁtoṣasya nāsty antas tuṣṭis tu paramaṁ sukham", i.e., "there is no end to dissatisfaction, and contentment is the soul of bliss." (Ma. Bhā. Vana, 215.22); and both the Jain and Buddhistic religions are based on the same foundation; and in the Western countries, Schopenhauer has

maintained [1] the same opinion. But on the other hand, one may ask whether one should cut off the tongue altogether because it sometimes utters obscene words, and whether people have discontinued the use of fire and given up cooking food on the ground that houses sometimes catch fire. If we make use of electricity, to say nothing of fire, in daily life, by keeping them under proper control, it is not impossible for us to dispose of Thirst or dissatisfaction in the same way. It would be a different matter, if this dissatisfaction was wholly and on all occasions disadvantageous; but on proper consideration we see that such is not the case. Dissatisfaction does not mean merely craving or weak-kneedness. Such a kind of dissatisfaction has been discountenanced even by philosophers. But the dissatisfaction which is at the root of the desire not to remain stagnant in the position which has fallen to one's lot, but to bring it to as excellent a condition as possible by gradually improving it more and more, with as peaceable and equable a frame of mind

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as possible, is not a dissatisfaction which ought to be discountenanced. It need not be said that a society divided

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[1] Schopenhauer's *World as Will and Representation* Vol. II Chap. 46. The description given by him of the unhappiness of worldly life is excellent. The original work is in the German language, and it has been translated into English.

into four castes will soon go to rack and ruin if the Brahmins give up the desire for knowledge, the Kṣatriyas for worldly prosperity, and the Vaiśyas for property. With this purport in view, Vyāsa has said to Yudhiṣṭhira:— "yajño vidyā samuttānam asaṁtoṣaḥ śriyaṁ prati" (Śān. 23. 9), i.e., "sacrifice, learning, effort, and dissatisfaction in the matter of worldly acquisitions", are virtues in the case of Kṣatriyas. In the same way, Vidulā in advising her son says: "saṁtoṣo vai śriyaṁ hanti" " (Ma. Bhā. U. 132.33), i.e., "by contentment, worldly prosperity is destroyed"; and there is also a statement on another occasion that: "asaṁtoṣaḥ śriyo mūlaṁ" (Ma. Bhā. Sabhā. 55.11) [1] i.e., "dissatisfaction is the root of prosperity". Although contentment is referred to as a virtue in the case of Brahmins, it only means contentment with reference to wealth or worldly prosperity, according to the four-caste arrangement. If a Brahmin says that the knowledge which he has acquired is enough for him, he will bring about his own undoing, and the same will be the case with the Vaiśyas or the Śūdras, if they always remain satisfied with what they have acquired according to their own status in life. In short, discontent is the seed of all future prosperity, effort, opulence and even of Release; and, it must always be borne in mind by everybody, that if this discontent is totally annihilated, we will be nowhere, whether in this world or in the next. In the Bhagavadgītā itself, in listening to the advice of Śrī Kṛṣṇa,

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[1] cf: "Unhappiness is the cause of progress." Dr. Paul Carus in The Ethical Problem p. 251 (2nd Ed.)

Arjuna has said:— "bhūyaḥ kathaya tṛptir hi śṛṇvato nāsti me 'mṛtam" (Gī. 10.18), i.e., "I am not satisfied with what I have heard of your nectar like speech, therefore, describe to me more and more of your manifestations"; and then the Blessed Lord has again started enumerating his manifestations. He did not say to him: "restrain your desire, dissatisfaction or discontent is improper". From this it follows that even the Blessed Lord Himself considered it proper that One should entertain discontent about a good or beneficial matter, and there is a

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stanza of Bhartṛhari that: "yaśasi cābhirucir vyāsanam śrutau" etc., i.e., "there ought to be liking or desire, but that should be for success; and one must also have a vice, but that should be of learning; that vice is not prohibited". Still, we must control discontent, in the same way as Desire, Anger etc., because if it becomes uncontrolled, it will clearly end in our undoing; and therefore, the endowment (saṃpatti) of those persons who continually run after worldly happiness piling thirst on thirst, and hope on hope with the sole object of enjoying objects of pleasure is referred to as "ungodly endowment" (āsara saṃpat) in the 16th Chapter of the Gītā. Not only are the pure (sāttvika) tendencies in the human mind destroyed by such greediness and the man undone, but, in as much as it is impossible that Thirst should ever be quenched, the desire for

enjoyment of objects of pleasure grows continually, and man's life is ended in the greed. But on the other hand, giving up all kinds of Thirst, and with it, all Actions, in order to escape this evil effect of Thirst or discontent is also not the pure (sāttvika) path. As has been stated above, Thirst or discontent is the seed of future prosperity: and therefore, instead of attempting to kill an innocent man out of fear for a thief, one has to carefully consider what Thirst or discontent causes unhappiness, and adopt the skillful middle path of giving up only that particular hope, thirst or discontent which produces unhappiness, and it is not necessary for that purpose to give up all kinds of Action whatsoever. This device or skill (kauśalaṁ) of giving up only that hope which causes unhappiness and performing one's duties according to one's status in life is known as Yoga or Karma-yoga (Gī. 2.50.); and, as that is the Yoga which has been principally dealt with in the Gītā, I shall consider here in a little more detail what kind of hope has been looked upon by the Gītā as productive of unhappiness.

In describing above the, actual nature, of human pain and unhappiness, I have stated that a man hears by his ears, feels by his skin, sees by his eyes, tastes by his tongue, and smells by his nose; and that a man is happy or unhappy according as these activities of his organs are consistent with their natural tendencies. But, the question of pain and happiness is not completely exhausted by making this definition. Although it

is necessary that the organs should, in the first instance, come into contact with external objects in order that Material pain or happiness should arise, yet, if one considers in what way this pain or happiness is subsequently experienced by man, it will be seen that a man has ultimately to perform the function of realising, that is, of taking on himself, this pain or happiness, which results from the activities of the organs, by means of his Mind (manas). "cakṣuḥ paśyati rupāṇi manasā na tu cakṣuṣā", i.e., "the function of seeing is not performed solely by the eyes: the assistance of the mind is absolutely necessary for it" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 311.17); and it is stated in the Mahābhārata that if that mind is in pain, then even having seen is as if you have not seen, and even in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad, there are such statements as: "anyatramanā abhūvaṁ nādarśam", i.e., "my mind was elsewhere, and therefore, I did not see", or, "anyatramanā abhūvaṁ nāśrauṣam", i.e., "my mind was elsewhere, and therefore, I did not hear" (Bṛ. 1.5.3). From this it becomes clear, that in order to experience Material pain or happiness, the organs are not sufficient by themselves, but require the assistance of the Mind; and as regards Metaphysical pain or happiness, it is purely mental. It, therefore, follows that all experience of pain or happiness ultimately depends on the Mind; and if this is true, it naturally follows that it is not impossible to control the experience of

pain or happiness if one controls the mind. With regard to these facts, Manu has described the characteristics of pain and happiness in a different way than the Nyāya school. He says:

sarvaṁ paravaśaṁ duḥkhaṁ sarvaṁ ātmavaśaṁ  
sukhaṁ ।

etad vidyāt samāśena lakṣaṇaṁ sukhaduḥkhaṇyoh ॥  
(Manu. 4.160).

that is, "all that which is subject to the control of others (external objects) is unhappiness, and all that which is subject to the control of oneself (of one's mind) is happiness; these are in brief the characteristic features of pain and happiness". The word 'suffering' (vedanā) used in the connotation of pain and happiness given by the Nyāya school, includes both physical and mental suffering, and it also shows the actual external nature of pain and happiness; and when one bears in

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mind that Manu is referring principally to the internal experience of pain and happiness, there remains no inconsistency between these two definitions. When in this way, we do not make the experience of pain or happiness depend on the organs:—

bhaiṣajyam etad duḥkhasya yad etan nānucintayet ।

that is, "not brooding on one's unhappiness, becomes the most potent medicine for doing away with unhappiness" (Ma, Bhā. Śān. 205.2); and we find numerous illustrations in history, of people having hardened their minds, and willingly sacrificed their lives for the sake of their Religion or of Truth. Therefore, says the Gītā, when one does what one has to do with- perfect mental control and after giving up the DESIRE FOR THE RESULT (phalāśā) and with a frame of mind which is equal towards pain and happiness, there remains no fear or possibility of experiencing the unhappiness of Actions, and it does not become necessary to give them up. Giving up the desire for the result does not mean giving up the resulting benefit, if it has been acquired, nor entertaining a desire that no one should ever get that benefit. In the same way, there is a world of difference between the desire for the result and the Desire, Hope, or Motive for performing Action, or employing a particular means for obtaining a particular result. There is a difference between merely desiring to move one's hands and feet and desiring to move one's hands for catching or one's feet for kicking someone else. The first desire extends merely to the doing of the act and there is no other motive behind it; and if we give up this desire, all Action will come to an end. Besides having this desire, a man must also have the knowledge that every act is sure to have some result or consequence; and not only must he have that knowledge, but he must entertain the desire of doing a particular act with the intention of thereby producing some particular result;



otherwise, all his Actions will be as pointless as those of a madman. All of these desires, motives, or arrangements do not ultimately produce pain; nor does the Gītā ask you to give them up. But if one goes much further than that, and allows his mind to be afflicted by the.

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ATTACHMENT (āśakti), ambition, pride, self-identification, or insistence of MINE-NESS (mamatva), which exists in the mind of the doer with reference to the result of the Action in the shape of the feeling that: "whatever action is performed by ME is performed by ME with the intention that ' I ' should: necessarily get a particular benefit from a particular act of MINE "; and if thereafter there is any obstruction in the-matter of getting the desired result or benefit, the chain of misery starts. If this obstruction is inevitable and is an act of Fate, man only suffers from despair; but, if it is the handiwork of another person, it gives rise later on to anger or even- hate, and this hate leads to evil action, and evil action leads to- self-destruction. This attachment, in the shape of MINE- NESS, for the result of the Action, is also known as 'phalāśā' (hope of benefit), 'saṁga' (fondness), 'ahamkāra-buddhi' (egoism), and 'kāma' (desire); and in order to show that the- chain of unhappiness in life really starts at this point, it is: stated in the second chapter of the Gītā, that Desire springs, from Attachment for objects of pleasure, Anger (krodha) from.

Desire, Mental Confusion (moha) from Anger, and ultimately,, the man himself is destroyed (Gī. 2.62, 63). When I have thus established that Actions in the gross material world, which are lifeless in themselves, are not themselves the root of unhappiness, but that the true root of unhappiness is the Hope for result, Desire, or Attachment with which man performs those Actions,, it naturally follows that in order to prevent this unhappiness, it is quite enough if a person, by controlling his mind, gives up. the Attachment, Desire or Hope of result entertained by him towards the objects of pleasure; and it follows logically that it is not necessary to give up all objects of pleasure, or Actions, or Desires as prescribed by the Sāṃnyāsa school. Therefore, it is next stated in the Gītā (Gī. 2.64), that that man who partakes of the objects of pleasure he comes across in the world, with a desireless and unattached frame of mind, without entertaining any hope of result, is the true 'sthita-prajña' (steady-in-mind). The activity of Action in the world never comes to an end. Even if man ceases to exist in this world. Matter (prakṛti) will carry on its activities according to its constituent qualities (guṇa-dharma). Gross Matter would not

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in any way be happy or unhappy on that account. Man arrogates to himself an undue importance, and becomes attached to the activities of Matter, and in that way suffers

pain and happiness. But if he gives up this attachment, and performs all his Actions in the belief that 'guṇā guṇeṣu vartante', i.e., "all activities are going on according to the constituent qualities of Matter" (Gī. 3.38), there will remain no unhappiness in the shape of discontent. Therefore, Vyāsa has advised Yudhiṣṭhira that instead of lamenting that worldly life is principally unhappy, and attempting to give up such life, one should believe that Matter is carrying on its own activities, and that –

sukhaṁ vā yadi vā duḥkhaṁ priyaṁ vā yadi vāpriyaṁ ।  
prāptaṁ prāptaṁ upāsīta hṛdayenāparājitaḥ ॥ (Ma,  
Bhā. Śān. 25.26).

that is, "one should put up with whatever takes place, whenever it takes place, without being disheartened, (that is to say, without becoming dejected, and giving up one's duty), whether it causes happiness or unhappiness, and whether it is pleasurable or unpleasant." The full importance of this advice will be appreciated when one bears in mind that one has to perform some duties in life, even suffering the pain which they cause. In the Bhagavadgītā itself, the characteristic features of the sthitapraña are described in the words: "yaḥ sarvatrānabhsnehas tat tat prāpya śuhhāśubham" (2.57), i.e., "that man who, when anything favourable or unfavourable happens, always remains unattached, and neither welcomes it nor dislikes it, is the true sthitapraña "; and in the fifth chapter it is stated that, "na prahṛṣyet priyaṁ prāpya nodvijet prāpya

cāpriyam" (5.20), i.e., "when you experience happiness, you should not on that account become excited; and when you experience unhappiness, you should also not on that account become dejected "; and it is stated in the second chapter, that this pain and happiness must be borne with a desireless frame of mind (2.14, 15); and the same advice has been repeatedly given in various other places (Gī. 5.9; 13.9). In the terminology of Vedānta Philosophy, doing this is called

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'dedicating all Actions to the Brahman' (Brahārpaṇa), and in the Path of Devotion, the word 'Kṛṣṇārpaṇa' (dedication to Kṛṣṇa) is used instead of 'Brahārpaṇa' (dedication to the Brahman); and this is the sum and substance of the whole of the preaching of the Gītā.

Whatever the nature of the Action, when one does not give up the Desire to do it, nor also one's activity, but goes on performing whatever one wants to do, being equally prepared "for the resulting pain or happiness, with an aloof frame of mind, and without entertaining the hope for the result, not only does one escape the evil effects due to non-control of Thirst or discontent, but also the danger of the world becoming desolate .as a result of Action being destroyed in the attempt to destroy Thirst; and all our mental impulses remain

pure and become beneficial to all created beings. It is clear beyond doubt that , in order in this way to be able to give up the hope for the result, one must obtain perfect control over the mind and over the organs by means of Apathy (vairāgya). But, there is a world of difference between (i) keeping one's organs under control and allowing them to perform their various activities, not for a selfish purpose, but apathetically and desirelessly and for the welfare of others, on the one hand, and (ii) deliberately destroying all Actions, that is to say, all the activities of the various organs in order to kill Thirst, as prescribed by the Path of Renunciation, on the other hand. The Apathy and Control, of the organs prescribed by the Gītā is of the first kind and not of the second kind; and in the same way, in the conversation between Janaka and the Brahmin in the Anugītā (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 32, 17 – 23) the king Janaka says to Dharma, who had appeared to him in the form of a Brahmin that:

ṣṛṇu buddhiṃ ca yāṃ jñātvā sarvatra viṣayo mama ॥  
 nāham ātmārtham icchāmi gāndhān ghrāṇagatān api ।  
 ... ..  
 nāham ātmārtham icchāmi mano nityaṃ manontare ।  
 mano me nirjitaṃ tasmād vaśe tiṣṭhati sarvadā ॥

that is, "I will describe to you that apathetic frame of mind (vairāgya) with which I enjoy all objects of pleasure. I do not

'for myself' smell any scent, nor do I not 'for myself see anything with my eyes etc.; and I do not also put to use my mind for my Self (atmārtha), that is, for my own benefit; therefore, I have conquered my nose (eyes etc.) and my mind, and they are all under my control ". This is what is meant by the ' statement in the Gītā (Gī. 3.6, 7) that he who merely chokes up the impulses of the organs but contemplates objects of pleasure by his mind is a hypocrite, and he who conquers the desiring frame of mind by means of mental control, and allows all his mental impulses to carry on their various activities for the benefit of the world is the real superman. The external world, or the activities of the organs are not something which- we have brought into existence, but they are self-created; and however self-controlled a saṁnyāsī may be, yet, when his hunger becomes uncontrollable, he goes out to beg for food (Gī. 3.33); or when he has sat for a considerable length of time in one place, he gets up and stands for some time. If we see that however much there is of mental control, one cannot, escape the inherent activities of the organs, then the wisest course is seen to be not to perversely attempt to destroy the- impulses of the organs, and at the same time all Actions and all kinds of Desire or Discontent (Gī. 2.47; 18.59), but to give up the hope for the result by controlling the mind, and to look upon pain and happiness as alike (Gī. 2.38), and to perform all Actions desirelessly and for

the benefit of the world as prescribed by the Śāstras.  
Therefore, the Blessed Lord first tells Arjuna in the following stanza:

karmaṇy evādhikāras te mā phaleṣu kadācana ।  
mā karmaphalahetur bhūr mā te saṅgostv akarmaṇi ॥  
(Gī. 2.47).

that, in as much as you have been born in this world of Action, therefore, "your authority extends only to the performance of Actions"; but bear in mind that this your authority extends only to the performance of Action which ought to be performed (that is, to kartavya). The word 'eva' which means 'only', clearly shows that the authority of man does not extend to anything other than karma, that is, to the result of the karma. But the Blessed Lord does not leave this important matter to be

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understood merely by inference, and He again, and in perfectly clear words, says in the second quarter of the stanza, that, "your authority never extends to the result of the Action", because, getting or not getting the result of the Action is not a matter which is within your control, but is always in the gift of the Paramēśvara or is dependent on the entire Effect of Causes (karma-vipāka) in the world. Hoping that a particular- thing

which is not within one's control should take place in a particular way, is a sign of madness. But the Blessed Lord has not left even this third thing for inference, and has in the third quarter of the stanza said:— "therefore, do not perform any Action, keeping in mind the hope for the result of the Action"; whatever may be the result of your Action according to the general law of Cause and Effect, will be its effect; it is not possible that such result should be more or less, or take place earlier or later, according to your desires, and by entertaining any such, desire, it is only you who suffer unnecessary pain and trouble. But here some persons – especially those who follow the Path of Renunciation – will object: "Is it not better to give up Action (karma) altogether rather than engaging in the useless procedure, of performing Actions and giving up the hope of the result?" And therefore, the Blessed Lord has in the last quarter of the stanza made the definite statement that "do not insist upon not performing Action," but perform Action according to the authority which you possess, though without entertaining any hope for the result. These doctrines are so important from the point of view of Karma-Yoga, that the four quarters of the above stanza may be said to be the four aphorisms (catuḥ-sūtrī) of the science of Karma-Yoga or of the Gītā religion.

If worldly activity is not to be given up, although happiness and unhappiness always befall you alternatively in life, and although it is an established fact that the sum total of



unhappiness is greater than that of happiness, then some persons- are likely to think, that all human efforts towards the total elimination of unhappiness and the acquisition of total happiness- are futile; and if one considers only Material Happiness, that, is to say, happiness in the shape of the enjoyment of external objects of pleasure through the medium of the organs, this- their objection will have to be admitted to be substantial. Just

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as the Moon never comes within the grasp of the little children who spread out their little hands towards the heavens in order to catch hold of it, so also those persons, who run after Material Happiness in the hope of reaching the highest form of happiness, will in any case find it very difficult to reach the highest form of happiness. But as Material Happiness is not the only kind of happiness, it is possible to find out the way of acquiring the highest and the constant form of happiness, even in this difficult position. As has been stated above, when happiness is divided into the two divisions of physical and mental happiness, one has to attach a higher importance to the activities of the mind than to the activities of the body or of the organs. Even the well-known Materialist philosopher

Mill has admitted in his book on Utilitarianism, [1] that the theorem that the merit of Mental happiness is higher than that of bodily (i.e., Material) happiness, which has been laid down by scientists (jñānin), is not made by them as a result of any arrogance about their own knowledge but because the true greatness or appropriateness of the superior human birth consists in Knowledge. Dogs, pigs, oxen etc. also like the happiness of the organs in the same way as human beings; and if the human race was of the opinion that enjoyment of objects of pleasure is the only true happiness in the world, then man would be ready to become a beast. But in as much as nobody is willing to become a beast, notwithstanding that he can thereby obtain all the physical happiness which can be got by beasts, it is clear that there is something more in a human being than in a beast. When one begins to consider what this something is, one has to investigate into the nature of that Ātman which acquires the knowledge of one's Self and of the external world by means of the Mind and of the Reason (buddhi); and when one has once begun to think of this matter, one naturally comes to the conclusion that, that happiness

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[1] "It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool, or the pig, is of a different opinion, it is because they only know their own side of the question". Utilitarianism p. 14 (Longman's, 1907).

which is to be found in the extremely noble activities and in the purest state of the Mind and of the Reason is the highest, or the most ideal happiness of mankind, as compared with the happiness of the enjoyment of objects of pleasure, which is common to man and beast. This kind of happiness is self-controlled, that is, it can be acquired without depending on external objects, and without reducing the happiness of others, and by one's own exertions; and as a man becomes better and better, the nature of this happiness becomes more and more pure and unalloyed. Bhartṛhari has said that "manasi ca parituṣṭe ko 'rthavān ko daridraḥ", i.e., "when the mind is satisfied, the beggar is the same as the rich man", and the well-known Greek philosopher Plato has maintained that Mental Happiness is superior to bodily (that is, external or Material) happiness, and that, that happiness which can be realised only by means of the Reason, (which is the highest Metaphysical Happiness), is superior even to' Mental Happiness. [1] Therefore, even if we for the time being keep aside the question of Release, the fact that that Reason, alone can obtain the highest happiness, which is engrossed in the contemplation of the Ātman, is definitely proved; and therefore, after happiness has been divided in the Bhagavadgītā into the three divisions of sāttvika, rājasa and tāmasa , it is first stated that "tat sukhaṁ sāttvikaṁ proktaṁ ātma-buddhi-prasāda-jam", i.e., "that Metaphysical Happiness

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[1] Republic (Book IX).

which is the result of the contentedness of the Self-engrossed Reason (that is, of the Reason which having realised the true nature of the Ātman, namely, that there is only one Ātman in all created beings, is engrossed in that idea) is the sāttvika (placid), that is, the most superior kind of happiness (Gī. 18.37)r and the Gītā goes on to say that the Material Happiness arising from the organs and the objects of the organs is of a lower grade, that is, is rājasa (Gī. 18.38); and that the happiness which arises from sleep, or idleness or which confuses the mind is the most inferior form, that is, is tāmasa . That is the meaning which is conveyed by the stanza from the Gītā which has been quoted at the commencement of this chapter and the Gītā itself says (Gī. 6.25) that when a man has once

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experienced this beatific happiness, he is not shaken from this peaceful mental frame, whatever the magnitude of the misfortune which subsequently befalls him. This beatific happiness is not to be found even in the enjoyment of heavenly objects of pleasure, and the Reason of a man has in the first instance to become absolutely contented before he can experience it. He who is always engrossed in the enjoyment of the objects of pleasure, without seeing how he can keep his frame of mind contented, experiences happiness, which is temporary and inconstant Because, that organic

happiness which exists to-day, ceases to exist tomorrow; and what is more, that thing which our organs look upon as productive of happiness today, becomes for some reason or other, productive . of unhappiness tomorrow. For instance, the same cold water which is desirable in summer, becomes undesirable in winter; .and even if one acquires the happiness, the desire for happiness, as has been mentioned above, is never fully quenched. Therefore, although the world 'happiness' can be applied comprehensively to all kinds of happiness, yet, one has to differentiate between happiness and happiness. In ordinary practice, the word ' happiness ' means principally ' organic happiness'. But when it becomes necessary to differentiate between the happiness of the enjoyment of objects of pleasure from that happiness which is beyond the organs, that is, which is beyond organic happiness, and which can be realised only by the self- engrossed Reason, the Material Happiness which consists of the enjoyment of objects of pleasure, is called simply 'happiness' (sukham or preyas), and the Metaphysical Happiness which is born of Self Realisation (ātma-buddhi-prasādaja) is called 'beatific happiness' (śreyas), blessing (kalyāṇam), amelioration (hitam), beatitude (ānanda), or peace (śānti). The distinction made between 'preyas' and ' śreyas' by Naciketā in the sentence from the Kaṭhopeniṣad quoted at the end of the last chapter, has been made on this basis. Mr̥tyu (Death) had already in the beginning explained to him the esoteric secrets of Fire (agni). But, when after having acquired that happiness, Naciketā

asked for the blessing of being explained what was meant by the Knowledge or Realisation of the Ātman (ātmajñāna), Mṛtyu tempted him

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with many other kinds of worldly happiness instead. But Naciketā was not tempted by these transient Material kinds of happiness, or things which appeared pleasing (preyas) on the face of them, and extending his vision, he insisted on having, and ultimately succeeded in acquiring, that philosophy of the, Ātman which led to the blessing (śreyas) of his Ātman (Self) and was ultimately beneficial. In short, our philosophers have been looking upon that Reason-born happiness or Metaphysical beatitude, which results from the Realisation of the Ātman, as the most superior happiness and their advice is that this happiness is such as can be obtained by everybody, in as much as it is self-controlled, and that everybody should try to acquire it. That wonderful and special happiness which belongs to mankind in addition to its beastly qualities is this happiness; and this happiness of the Ātman (ātmānanda) is the most constant, the most independent and the most excellent of all happiness, in as much as it is independent of external circumstances. This peace is called in the Gītā (Gī. 6.15) by the name of the Peace (śānti) of Emancipation (nirvāṇa); and it is also the climax of happiness which pertains to the Brahmi

state of the sthitaprajña (steady-in-mind) described in the Gītā (Gī. 2.71; 6.28; 12.12; 18.62).

In this way, we have proved that the peace or happiness of the Ātman is the most excellent of all happiness, and that .as it is self-controlled, it is such as can be acquired by everybody. But by proving that gold is the most valuable of all metals, iron and other metals do not cease to be useful; and though sugar is sweet, one cannot do without salt; and the same is the case with the happiness of the Ātman or of Peace (śānti). At any rate, it cannot be disputed that Material objects are necessary for the protection of the body, along with this Peace; and therefore, in the phrases used for blessing, one does not say simply: "śāntirastu," (May there be śānti , i.e., Peace), but say: "śāntiḥ puṣṭis tuṣṭiś cāstu", that is, 'May there also be puṣṭi (Material Happiness), and tuṣṭi (contentedness) along with śānti (peace). If our philosophers had been of the opinion that one ought to acquire contentedness (tuṣṭi) by having merely Peace (śānti), there would have been no occasion to add

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to this phrase, the word 'puṣṭi. Nevertheless, it is also not proper to have an inordinate desire for increase of Material Happiness (that is, puṣṭi). Therefore, this phrase means: "May you have Peace, Material happiness and also Contentedness in

proper proportions, and that you must obtain them". The same is the moral of the Kaṭhōpaniṣad. The only matter which has been described in detail in this Upaniṣad is that after Naciketā had gone to the sphere of Yama, that is, of Death, Yama asked him to ask for three blessings, and that. Yama accordingly gave him the three blessings which he had asked for. But after Mṛtyu had asked Naciketā to ask for blessings, Naciketā did not in the first place ask for the blessing of Brahman-Realisation (Brahmajñāna), but first said:— "My father has got angry with me; may he become propitious to me"; and then, "teach me the science of Fire (agni), that is, of all sacrificial ritual which will give me material opulence"; and, when he had acquired these blessings, he asked for the third blessing saying: "teach me the Knowledge of the Ātman". But when Mṛtyu began to say to him that he would give him! (Naciketā) additional happiness instead of this third blessing, Naciketā has insisted: "now explain to me that Brahmajñāna which will lead to śreyas", instead of aspiring for possessing more of the knowledge of sacrificial ritual than was necessary for obtaining preyas. In short, as stated in the last mantra of this Upaniṣad, Naciketā obtained both the 'Brahma-vidyā' (knowledge of the Brahman), and "yoga-vidhi" (sacrificial ritual), and he was emancipated (Katha 6. 8). From this it follows, that the combination of jñāna and karma is the summary of the preaching of this Upaniṣad. There is also a similar story about Indra. Not only had Indra himself acquired fully the Knowledge of the Brahman, (Brahmajñāna) but he



had taught the science of the Ātman (ātmavidyā) to. Prataardana, as has been stated in the Kauṣītakyupaniṣad. Yet, after Indra had lost his kingdom and Prahlāda had become the king of the three spheres, Indra went to Bṛhaspati, the preceptor of the gods, and asked him to explain to him in what śreyas lay. Then Bṛhaspati taught the dethroned Indra the Brahmagvidyā, that is, the Knowledge of the Ātman, (ātmajñāna) and said to him that that was all which was

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śreyas (etāvac chreya iti). But 'Indra was not satisfied and again asked the question: "ko viśeṣo bhavet?", i.e., "Is there anything more?"; thereupon Bṛhaspati sent him to Śukrācārya. There, there was a repetition of the same process, and Śukrācārya said to him: "That something more is known to Prahlāda." Then at last Indra went to Prahlāda in the form of a Brahmin and became his disciple, and after same time had passed, Prahlāda explained to him that 'śīlam', (the habit of behaving consistently with Truth and Morality) was the master-key for gaining the kingdom of the three spheres, and that that was also known as śreyas. Then, when Prahlāda said to him: "I am very much pleased by your service, I shall give you whatever blessing you may ask", Indra, in the form of the Brahmin, said to him: "Give me your 'śīlam' ". When Prahlāda consented, the deity 'śīlam', and after it Morality (dharmam), Veracity (satyam), good conduct (vṛtta), and ultimately opulence (śrī)

and other deities left the body of Prahlāda and entered the body of Indra, and in this way Indra regained his kingdom: such is the ancient story which has been told by Bhīṣma to Yudhiṣṭhira in the Śāntiparva (Śān. 124). Although the Knowledge of the Brahman by itself may be worth more than prosperity (aiśvaryam) by itself, yet, in as much as whoever has to live in this world is under the obligation and has also the moral right to acquire material prosperity for himself or for his own country in the same way as it is possessed by others or by other countries, the highest ideal of man in this world, as is apparent from this beautiful story, is seen to be the combination of Peace (śānti), and Material Happiness (puṣṭi), or of desired things (preyas) and true and lasting benefit (śreyas), or of Knowledge (jñānam) and prosperity (aiśvaryam), according to our Karma-Yoga science. Has that Bhagavān than Whom there is) none higher in this world, and Whose path is followed by others (Gī. 3.33), Himself given up prosperity and wealth? The word 'bhaga' has been defined in the Śāstras as:

aiśvaryasya samagrasya dharmasya yaśasaḥ śriyaḥ ।  
jñānavairāgyayoś caiva ṣaṇṇām bhaga itīraṇā ॥ (Viṣṇu.  
6.5.74).

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that is, "the word 'bhaga' includes the followings six things, namely, complete Yogic prosperity, righteousness, success,

property, knowledge, and apathy". The word 'aiśvaryam' in this stanza is usually taken to mean 'Yogaiśvaryam' (Yogic prosperity), because the word 'śrī', that is, wealth, appears later on. But as ordinarily, the word 'aiśvaryam' is used to mean and include authority, success, and wealth, and the word 'jñānam' includes apathy and righteousness, we may say that in ordinary parlance, the entire meaning conveyed by the above stanza is included in the two words 'jñānam' and 'aiśvaryam', and in as much as the Blessed Lord has Himself accepted the combination of jñānam and aiśvaryam, other persons should consider that as proper and act accordingly (Gī. 3.21; Ma. Bhā. Śān. 341.25). The doctrine that the knowledge of the Ātman is the only ideal of man in this world is a doctrine of the school of Renunciation, which says that, as worldly life is full of unhappiness, it should be given up; it is not a doctrine of the Karma-Yoga science, and it is not proper to mix up these doctrines of different schools of thought and pervert the meaning of the Gītā. And as the Gītā itself says that mere prosperity without Knowledge is a godless prosperity (āśura saṁpatti), it follows that we must always maintain the union of jñānam with aiśvaryam, or of aiśvaryam with jñānam, or of śānti with puṣṭi. When it is admitted that aiśvaryam is necessary, though along with jñānam, it necessarily follows that Action must be performed. Manu has said that: "karmāṇy ārabhamāṇaṁ hi puruṣaṁ śrīṁ niṣevate " (Manu. 9.300), i.e., "in this world, only those persons who perform Action, acquire śrī (prosperity)". The same thing is established by our personal

experience, and the same is the advice given in the Gītā to Arjuna (Gi, 3.8). Some persons take the objection to this position that in as much as Action is not necessary for Release, all Action must be given up ultimately, that is, after the acquisition of Knowledge. But, as I am at present considering the question only of pain and happiness, and also as I have not yet gone into the examination of the natures of Action (karma) and Release (mokṣa), I shall not here answer that exception. I shall explain in detail in the ninth and tenth chapters what Metaphysics, and the Theory of Cause and Effect are, and then

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in the eleventh chapter, I will prove that even this objection is groundless.

I have so far shown that pain and happiness are two independent and different sufferings; that, as it is impossible to satisfy the desire for happiness by the enjoyment of happiness, we find that in ordinary life the sum total of unhappiness is always greater; that, in order to escape this unhappiness, the most meritorious thing to do is not to totally destroy Thirst or Discontent and at the same time Action itself, but to continue the performance of all Actions without entertaining any hope for the result; that, the happiness of enjoying objects of pleasure is in itself a happiness, which is

always insufficient, inconstant, and beastly, and that the true ideal of man, who is endowed with Reason, must be higher than such happiness; "that, this true ideal is the happiness of the peace (śānti) which results from Self-Realisation; but that, although Metaphysical Happiness is, in this way, superior to Material Happiness, yet, one must possess with it also a proper quantity of worldly objects; and that therefore, we must also make Effort, that is, perform Action, desirelessly. When these conclusions have been firmly established by the Karma-Yoga science, I need not further say that it is wrong to decide questions of Morality by the consideration of the external effects of Actions in the shape of pain and happiness on the basis that Material Happiness is the highest ideal of man – even looking at the question from the point of view of Happiness merely. Because, looking upon a thing which can never by itself reach the state of perfection, as the 'highest' ideal, is misusing the word 'highest' (parama), and is as unreasonable as believing that water exists, where there is only a mirage. If one's highest ideal is itself inconstant and incomplete, then, what else, except something inconstant can one acquire, by keeping that ideal before one's eyes? This is what is meant by the words: "dharmo nityaḥ sukhaduḥkhe tv anitye", i.e., "morality is immutable; pain and happiness are mutable". There is much difference of opinion among Materialistic philosophers themselves as to how the word 'happiness', in the phrase 'the greatest happiness of the

greatest number', is to be understood. Some of these philosophers are of opinion that, in

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as much as man is very often willing to sacrifice his life for the sake of Veracity, or of his Religion, casting aside all Material Happiness, it is not proper to say that his desire is always to acquire Material Happiness; and they have, therefore, maintained that we must use the word 'benefit' (hitam), or the word 'good' (kalyāṇam) instead of the word 'happiness' (sukham), and change the phrase 'greatest happiness of the greatest number' into the phrase 'greatest good or benefit of the greatest number'. But, even doing so, the objection that the Reason (buddhi) of the doer has not been taken into account, as also several other objections apply to this point of view. If one says that Mental Happiness must be taken into account, along with Material Happiness, then, the fundamental theorem that the morality of any particular Action must be decided by its external effects, is falsified, and one, to a certain extent, accepts the Metaphysical aspect of the matter. But, if in this way, you cannot escape accepting the Metaphysical aspect of the matter, then where is the sense of accepting it only halfway? Therefore, our philosophy of Karma-Yoga has ultimately come to the conclusion that the doctrines of 'the benefit of everybody', or 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number', or the highest development of humanness'

or other such external tests or Materialistic methods of determining questions of Morality are inferior tests, and that what is Right Action, and what Wrong Action or Non-Action must be determined by the Metaphysical tests of beatific happiness in the shape of Self-Realisation, and the attendant Pure Reason of the doer. The case is different, of course, of those persons who have sworn not to enter into the philosophy of things beyond the external world, under any circumstances. Otherwise, it only logically follows that one has got to go beyond Mind and Reason, and look upon the permanent benefit of the permanent Ātman as the most predominant factor, even in the Karma-Yoga science. The belief of some persons that when one enters into Vedānta, everything becomes Brahmised (Brahma-maya), and the necessity of worldly life' cannot satisfactorily be accounted for, is wrong. As the various works on Vedānta, which can ordinarily be read now-a-days have been written principally by followers of the Path of

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Renunciation, and as in the Path of Renunciation, worldly life in the shape of Thirst is looked upon as totally insipid, it is true that the science of Karma-Yoga has not been properly expounded in their works. Nay, these writers, who are intolerant of rival cults, have foisted the arguments of the Path of Renunciation on the Karma-Yoga, and attempted to create

the belief that Saṁnyāsa (Renunciation) and Karma- Yoga, are not two independent paths for obtaining Release (mokṣa), but that Saṁnyāsa is the only correct Path according to the Śāstras. But such a view is incorrect. The Path of Karma-Yoga has- been independently followed from times immemorial, side by side with the Path of Renunciation, according to the Vedic religion; and the promulgators of this path have very .satisfactorily expounded the science of Karma-Yoga, without departing from the elementary principles of Vedānta. The Bhagavadgītā is a work pertaining to this Path of Karma-Yoga. But, leaving aside the Gītā for the moment, it will be seen that the system of expounding the science of the doable and the not-doable from the Metaphysical point of view was started, even in England itself, by writers like Green, [1] and long before him, in Germany. However much one may consider the visible world, so long as one has not properly understood who is the HE who sees this visible world, or who performs these Actions, the consideration of the highest duty of man in this world will always remain incomplete from the philosophical point of view. Therefore, the advice of Yājñavalkya: "ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ", is literally applicable to the present case. If even after the examination of the external world, one ultimately comes to basic principles like philanthropy, then, "we must say that by such examination, the importance of the

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[1] Prolegomena to Ethics, Book I; and Kant's Metaphysics of Morals (trans, by Abbott, in Kant's Theory of Ethics).



science of the Highest Self (adhyātma) is not in any way belittled, but that this is one more proof of there being only one Ātman in all created things. If Materialistic philosophers cannot transcend the limitations which they have placed on themselves, there is no help for it. Our philosophers have

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extended their sight far beyond that, and have fully justified the science of Karma-Yoga on the basis of Metaphysics. But, in as much as it is necessary to consider another contrary view (pūrva-pakṣa), which deals with the subject of Right Action and Wrong Action or Non-Action, I shall deal with that view before explaining how that justification has been made.

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# CHAPTER VI.

## THE INTUITIONIST SCHOOL AND THE CONSIDERATION OF THE BODY AND THE ĀTMAN.

### (ĀDHIDAIVATA-PAKṢA AND KṢETRA- KṢETRAJÑA-VICĀRA).

satyapūtām vaded vācam manahpūtām samācaret [1]

~ Manu. (6.46).

There is another method of the consideration of the- question of Action, Non-Action, and Wrong Action, besides the Positive or Material method, namely, the Intuitionist (ādhidaivata) method. Those who belong to this school say that, when a man decides as to what is Action, Non-Action, or Wrong Action, or as to the doability or non-doability of any particular Action, he never troubles to find out how pain or happiness will result from any particular Action, and whether the sum total of happiness caused by it is greater than that of

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[1] "Speak that which has been purified (become pūta) by satyam (veracity); and behave in that way which your Mind considers as pure".

unhappiness, nor does he enter into the consideration of the Ātman and the Non-Ātman; and many persons do not understand these intricate questions. Nor even- does everybody do every particular act for his own happiness. Whatever arguments may be advanced by Materialist philosophers, if one considers minutely for a moment what the state of mind of a person is in determining the righteousness or unrighteousness of any particular Action, it will be seen that inherent and noble mental impulses like pity, kindness, philanthropy etc. impel him to do any particular act on the spot. For instance, when a man sees a beggar, his mind is inspired by the feeling of pity before the thought as to what benefit will be acquired by his Self or by his giving the beggar something in charity enters it, and he gets rid of the matter by giving the beggar whatever he can; in the same way, when her child begins to cry, the mother does not stop to consider

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how much how many people will be benefitted by her feeding it, but she at once begins to feed it. Therefore, the true foundations of the science of Karma-Yoga are these noble mental impulses. These "mental impulses have not been given to us by anybody, but they are Nature-born or inherent, or, in a sense, self-created deities. When a judge is seated in his judicial chair, he is inspired by the deity of Justice when he administers justice, and if he defies this inspiration, he

administers injustice. The inherent mental impulses of kindness, pity, philanthropy, gratitude, love for one's duty, courage and other virtues, are deities just like the deity of Justice. Everyone by nature knows what the true forms of these deities are. If ha defies the inspirations of these deities on account of avarice, hate or jealousy, or for some such other reason, what can these deities do? ,Now, it is true that there is sometimes a conflict between these deities themselves; then, we are in doubt as to the inspiration of which deity we should consider as predominant in doing a particular Action; and then it becomes necessary for us to consider some other power besides the deities, of Justice, Kindness, etc. in order to satisfy this doubt. But even if, on these occasions, we do not enter into the intricacies of Metaphysical considerations, or of the weighing of pain or happiness, but only consult our Mental Deity (manodevatā), that is, our Conscience, that deity immediately shows us which path is the more meritorious one; and therefore, Conscience is superior to all deities. The word 'Conscience' (manodevatā) is not to be understood as meaning and including desire ,anger, avarice, or the other emotions which inhabit the mind, but as meaning, in the present contest, the God-given or., inherent power which everyone possesses of choosing between good and bad. This very power has got the high-sounding name of, "Power of discriminating between the good and the bad" (sad-asad-viveka-buddhi), [1]

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[1] This 'sad-asad viveka-buddhi' means 'Conscience' in English; and the 'ādhidaivata pakṣa' is the Intuitionist School.

and if a person, on any occasion of doubt, thinks for a moment quietly and with a peaceful mind, this deity which, discriminates between the right and the wrong (sad-asad-vivecana-devatā)

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will never fail him. Nay, on such occasions, we say to other persons: "Consult your own mind". What importance to attach to what virtue is ready listed with this sovereign deity which immediately gives you her decision on any matter in accordance with this list, as occasion arises. Suppose, there is an occasion 1 when there is a conflict between the principles of Self-protection and Harmlessness, such as a famine, when we are in doubt as to whether Or not to eat uneatable food; then, we should consult- our Conscience, and immediately it will come out with the decision: " Eat the uneatable food ". Similarly, if there is a conflict between Self-interest, and philanthropy, that situation too must be -solved by the help of this Mental Deity. One writer has after peaceful thought stumbled on 'this list of the relative values' of righteous and unrighteous actions prepared by" the deity of Conscience, and he has published it in his book. [1] In this list, the highest place

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[1] This writer is James Martineau, and he has published this list in his work entitled "Types of Ethical Theory" (Vol. II. p. 266; 3rd Ed.). Martineau calls his school the Idio-psychological School. But I include this school in the Intuitionist School.

has been given to the feeling of Reverence combined with Humility; and Kindness, Gratitude, Generosity, Affection etc. are given the consecutive lower grades. This writer is of the opinion that when there is a conflict between a virtue of a lower order, and a virtue of a higher order, one must attach higher importance to the virtue of the higher order. According to this writer, there is no other proper way of determining the doability or non-doability or the righteousness or unrighteousness of any Action; because, even if we extend our vision as far as possible, and decide in what the 'greatest good of the greatest number' lies, yet in as much as our discriminating Reason does not possess the power or authority to order "us to do that in which the good ' of the greatest number lies, the question whether or not one should do that which is beneficial to 'the greatest number ultimately remains unsolved, and again the whole matter remains in abeyance. The decision of the doability or non-doability of an Action arrived at after a far-sighted consideration of pain and happiness

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will meet the same fate as that of a decision which may have been given by a judge who has not received proper authority from the king. Mere far-sightedness cannot tell a person to do something, or that he must do some particular thing; because, far-sightedness being a human product, it cannot control

human beings. On such occasions, there must be someone else having a higher authority than ourselves who gives the command; and this function can be satisfactorily discharged only by this God-given Conscience, which is superior to man, and therefore, in a position to- exercise authority over man. As this deity is self-created it is also usual, in ordinary parlance to say: "My Conscience (manodevatā) tells me a particular thing". The fact that when, a man has committed a sinful action, he is subsequently ashamed of it, and that his inner consciousness bites him, is- nothing else but the punishment of this Mental Deity; and that proves the existence of this independent Mental Deity. For otherwise, we cannot, according to this school of thought,, explain why our Conscience pricks only ourselves.

The summary given above is of the opinions of the Intuitionist School in the Western countries. In these- countries, this body of thought has been principally promulgated by Christian preachers; and in their opinion, this- God-given method is superior to, and easier to follow than the purely Materialistic methods for determining the righteousness- or unrighteousness of an Action, and is, therefore, the method which should be acted upon. Although in India there was no such independent section of the science of Kamia-Yoga in. ancient times, yet we come across similar opinions in many places in our ancient treatises. We find in many places in the Mahābhārata that the various mental impulses have been

given the forms of deities. I have referred in the foregoing pages to the story of the deities of Morality (dharmam), Prosperity (śrī) etc. having left the body of Prahlāda and entered the body of Indra. This deity who discriminates between doability and: non-doability, or righteousness and unrighteousness is called: 'Dharmam', and there are stories that this deity had manifested himself in the form of a śyena bird for testing the truthfulness of the King Śibi, and first in the form of a Yakṣa and later on

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in the form of a dog for testing Yudhiṣṭhira. Even in the Bhagavadgītā (10.34), Fame (kīrti), Opulence (śrī), Speech (vāk), Memory (smṛti), Acumen (medhā), Perseverance (dhṛti), and Forgiveness (kṣamā) are called deities; and out of these, memory, acumen, perseverance, and forgiveness are qualities of the mind. The Mind itself is a deity, and the worship of it has been prescribed in the Upaniṣads, as being a symbol of the Parabrahman (Taī. 3.4; Chān. 3.18). When Manu says: "manaḥpūtaṁ samācaret" (6.46), i.e., "Do what the Mind believes to be pure", he may be said to have intended the Mental Deity by the word 'manas' (Mind). In ordinary affairs, we say instead: "Do as the Mental Deity (manodevatā) pleases. In the Marathi language, the word 'manaḥpūta' has acquired quite the contrary meaning; and on many occasions, when a person does whatever he likes, he is said to behave



'manahpūta'. But the true meaning of this phrase is that: 'One should do only that which the Mind considers as sacred or pure'. In the fourth chapter of the Manu-Saṁhitā, Manu himself has made the meaning clearer by saying:

yat karma kurvato 'sya syāt paritoṣo 'ntarātmanaḥ ।  
tat prayatnena kurvīta viparītaṁ tu varjayet ॥ (Manu-  
Saṁh. 4.161).

that is, "One should perform by efforts that Action by which one's innermost Ātman is satisfied; and one should give up whatever is disliked by it", So also, Manu, Yājñavalkya, and the other Smṛti-writers, in mentioning the fundamental rules of practical morality such as the rules of Morality applicable to the four castes, etc. have said:—

vedaḥ smṛtiḥ sadācāraḥ svasya ca priyam ātmanaḥ ।  
etac caturvidhaṁ prāhuḥ sākṣād dharmasya lakṣaṇam  
॥ (Manu. 2.13).

that is, "the Vedas, the Smṛtis, good behaviour, and the satisfaction of one's Ātman, are the four fundamental elements of righteousness (dharmam). The meaning of the words 'the satisfaction of the Ātman' is, 'that which one's Mind looks upon as pure'; and it is quite clear that where the righteous-

ness or unrighteousness of any particular Action could not be decided by consulting the Śrutis, the Smṛtis, and the principles of good behaviour (sadācāra), the fourth means of deciding the matter was considered to be its 'manah-pūtātā', i.e., its 'being considered as pure by the Mind'. In the Mahābhārata, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, after relating the stories of Prahlaḍa and Indra mentioned in the last Chapter, has said in describing 'śīlam', that:

yad anyeṣāṁ hitaṁ na syād ātmanaḥ karma pauruṣam

|

apatrapeta vā yena na tat kuryāt kathamcana || (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 124. 66).

that is, "That Action of ours which is not beneficial to others, or of which we ourselves would feel ashamed, should not be performed in any case. My readers will notice that by using the expressions 'is not beneficial to others' and 'feel ashamed' this verse has included in the same place both the doctrines of 'the greatest good of the greatest number' and the Mental Deity'. Even in the Manu-Smṛti, that Action for having done which or when doing which one feels ashamed, is referred to as 'tāmasa', and that Action of doing which one does not feel ashamed, and whereby our innermost self (antarātman) remains happy, is referred to as 'sāttvika' (Manu. 12.35, 37); and these ideas are to be found also in the Buddhistic treatise Dhammapada (See Dhammapada, 67 and 68). Kālidāsa says

that when there is a doubt as to the doability or non-doability of any Action:—

satām hi sandehapadeṣu vastuṣu pramāṇam  
antaḥkaraṇapravṛttayaḥ | (Śākhun. 1.20).

That is, "saintly persons always consider as authoritative the dictates of their own Conscience". Controlling the mental impulses by concentrating the mind on a single object is the province of the Pātañjala Yoga, and as this Yoga-Śāstra has been in vogue in India from very ancient times, it was at no time necessary to teach our people the method of making the mind peaceful and quiet, and doing that which the Mind considered as proper, whenever there was any doubt about

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any matter. It is stated in the various Smṛtis at the very commencement, that the Ṛṣis who wrote them, used always to define righteousness and unrighteousness after first completely concentrating their minds (Manu. 11); and the method of thus consulting the dictates of Conscience on any matter also- seems at first sight extremely easy. But when one minutely considers what is meant by a 'pure mind' from the philosophical point of view, this facility of the matter disappears; and on that account, our philosophers have not based the edifice of Karma-Yoga on it. We must now consider what this philosophical point of view is; but before I do so, I

will here explain briefly how the Western Materialistic philosophers have refuted this Intuitionist theory. Because, although the reasons adduced by the Materialists and the Metaphysicians may be different, yet as the result arrived at by both is the same, I shall first deal with the arguments of the Materialists, in order that the importance and the propriety of the arguments of the Metaphysicians should be the better understood by my readers.

As the Intuitionist School has, as mentioned above, given, the highest place to Conscience Pure, it is clear that the objection against the Materialistic philosophy or morals, namely, that they do not attach any importance to the Reason of the doer, does not apply to the Intuitionist theory. But when one minutely considers what is to be called the 'Pure Conscience' in the shape of a Mental Deity which discriminates between the Right and the Wrong (*sad-asad-viveka-buddhiḥ*), it will be seen that other unconquerable difficulties arise with reference to this theory also. Nobody need be <sup>^</sup> told that whatever thing is taken considering it in all its bearings, and finding out whether or not it is performable or unperformable, doable or not-doable, or whether or not it will be advantageous or pleasant, is a thing which is not done by the nose or the eyes or any other organs, and that there is an independent organ, namely, the Mind, which serves that purpose. Therefore, doability or non-doability, righteousness or unrighteousness are things which must be determined by the Mind, whether

you call it an organ or a deity. If that were all that the Intuitionist school said, nobody

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would find any fault with it. But, Western Intuitionists have gone far beyond that. They say that deciding whether a thing is good or bad (sat or asat), just or unjust, righteous or unrighteous, is quite different from deciding whether a particular object is heavy or light, white or black, or whether a calculation is correct or incorrect. The Mind can, by logical methods, decide matters which fall within the second category; but the Mind itself is incapable of deciding on the matters mentioned in the first category, and that is a thing which can be done only by the Mental Deity in the shape of the Power of discrimination between good and bad. They explain this by saying that in determining whether a particular calculation is correct or incorrect, we first examine the additions or multiplications involved in it, and then arrive at a decision, that is to say, before determining this question, the Mind has to go through some other actions or activities; but the same is not the case in the matter of the discrimination between good and bad. As soon as we hear that somebody has murdered somebody else, we immediately utter the words: "What a bad thing has been done by him", and we have not to think about the matter at all. As the decision which we arrive at without any consideration, and the one which we arrive at

after consideration, cannot both be said to be the functions of one and the same mental capacity, we must say that Conscience is an independent Mental Deity. As this power or deity is equally awake in the hearts of all human beings, everyone looks upon murder as a crime, and nobody has to be taught anything about the matter. This Intuitionist argument is answered by Materialistic philosophers by saying, that from the fact that we can spontaneously arrive at a decision on any matter, we cannot draw the conclusion that such matter must be different from another matter as to which we come to a decision after proper consideration. Doing a thing quickly or slowly is a matter of practice. Take the case of calculations. Merchants quote the rate for the seer immediately on being given the rate for the khandy, by mental calculation. But on that account, their deity of calculation does not become different from the same deity of the best mathematicians. By habit, something

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becomes so much part and parcel of oneself, that one does it easily and without the slightest consideration. An excellent marksman easily shoots and kills birds on the wing; but no one, on that account, says that there is some independent deity of marksmanship. Not only that, but no one, on that account, considers the science of marksmanship or of calculating the speed of flying birds or other scientific

calculations as unnecessary. There is a story told of Napoleon Buonaparte, that as soon as he stood on the battle-field and cast only one glance all round, he could immediately find out the weakest point of the enemy. But, on that account, nobody said that the science of warfare is an independent deity, and that it is in no way connected with other mental faculties. It may be that one man has a greater aptitude for a particular thing than another. But on that account, we do not say that the two have two different kinds of intelligence. Besides, it is not that the decision on questions of doability or non-doability, or of righteousness or unrighteousness is made instantaneously on all occasions. Because, if such were the case, there would never have been any doubt as to whether a particular thing ought to be done or ought not to be done '. Not only is such doubt occasionally experienced by everyone, but, what is more, the decisions given by different persons as to the doability or non-doability of the same Action are different. If there is only one self-created deity in the form of 'Conscience', why should there be this difference? Therefore, we have to say, that a man comes to a decision on any particular matter, according as his mind is evolved or educated. There are many aboriginal tribes who do not consider murder a crime, but even eat human flesh with pleasure! But if we for a moment leave aside the case of uncivilised human beings, yet, according to the customs of different countries, something which is considered objectionable in one country is wholly acceptable in another

country. Marrying a second wife when the first one is alive, is considered a crime in England; but nobody thinks much of it in India. Indians would feel ashamed of sitting in an assembly without their turbans on; but in England people consider taking off one's hat as a sign of respect! If it were true that one feels ashamed of a wrong act as a result only of

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God-given or inherent Conscience, should not everyone feel equally ashamed of the same act? Even marauders consider it disgraceful to draw a sword against a person whose food they have eaten; but, even powerful civilised nations in the West consider it a sign of patriotism to murder people who are subjects of a neighbouring nation! If there is only one deity in the shape of Conscience, why should there be this difference? And if one admits different kinds of Conscience, according to civilization or according to the customs of countries, then the self-created immutability of Conscience itself suffers. As man leaves the uncivilised state and is gradually more and more civilised, so also are his Mind and Reason developed; and when in this way, the Reason has developed, man becomes capable of spontaneously conceiving such ideas as he would have been incapable of conceiving in his former uncivilised condition. We may even say that the Reason being developed in this way is a sign of civilisation, just as a civilised or educated person's not asking for everything which he casts his eyes on



is a sign of the control over the organs which has become ingrained in him, so also has the mental faculty of choosing between good and evil gradually grown in mankind, and it has now become so much part of human nature that we give our decision as to the morality of a thing spontaneously and without consideration. If we have to see things which are near or which are far, we have to contract the muscles and tendons of the eyes to a greater or lesser extent, and this is done so quickly that we never realise it; but has any one, on that account, looked upon the consideration of the reasons for this process as useless? In short, the Mind or the Reason of man are the same at all times and with reference to all matters. It is not that we decide between black and white by one kind of Reason and between good and evil by another kind of Reason. The only difference is that the Reason of a particular person may be more developed, whereas the Reason of another person may be uneducated or incompletely developed. Western Materialistic philosophers have' thus drawn the conclusion that when we bear in mind this difference, and also take into account our experience that being able to do any particular thing quickly is only a matter of habit or practice, we have no

reason for imagining that there is an independent and wonderful power like Conscience in addition to the natural faculties of the Mind.

The ultimate decision of our ancient philosophers on this matter is similar to that of the Western Materialistic philosophers. They admit the principle that it is necessary to consider any particular matter quietly and with a peaceful mind. But they do not accept the position that there is one kind of Reason which decides the question of righteousness and unrighteousness and another kind of Reason which decides whether a particular thing is black or white. The Mind arrives at a correct or incorrect decision according as it has been educated. They, therefore, say that everybody must make an effort to develop his Mind; and they have also given rules explaining what this development is and how it is to be made. But they do not accept the position that the power of discrimination between good and bad (*sad-asad-vivecana-śakti*) is some independent heavenly gift which is different from the ordinary Reason of a man. The question as to how a man acquires knowledge and how the activities of his Mind and Reason are carried on, have been very minutely examined in ancient times. This examination is technically known as "the consideration of the Body and the Ātman" (*kṣetra-kṣetrajña-vicāra*). '*kṣetra*' means the body and '*kṣetrajña*' means the Ātman. This *kṣetra-kṣetrajña-vicāra* is the foundation of Metaphysics; and as it is impossible to look upon the Power of

discrimination between good and bad or any other Mental Deity as higher than the Ātman when once one has properly understood this science of the Body and the Ātman, it becomes perfectly clear how the Intuitionist arguments are insufficient. I shall, therefore, in this place briefly consider the science of the Body (kṣetra or Field) and the Ātman (kṣetrajña). Thereby, my readers will be able to properly understand the correct meanings of many of the doctrines of the Bhagavadgītā.

The body of man (piṇḍa, kṣetra, or śarīra) may be said to be a great factory. As in any factory raw material is first taken in from outside, and then all the material is selected or arranged, and having determined which of the material is useful for the factory and which not, the raw material taken

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It is manufactured into different articles and sent out, so also are there numerous activities going on, every moment in the human body. The first of the means man has for acquiring the knowledge of the various objects in the world, made up of the five primordial elements, are his organs. The, true or fundamental form of the objects in the world cannot be realised by any one by means of his organs. Materialists say that such form is the same as it appears to our organs; but if

tomorrow a human being acquires another new organ, then, from his point of view the qualities of the different objects in the world will be different. Human organs are of two kinds, namely, organs of Action (karmendriya) and organs of perception (jñānendriya). The hands, the feet, the voice, the anus and the generative organs are the five organs of Action. All the Actions which we perform by means of our body are performed through these five organs. Besides these, there are the five organs of perception, namely, the nose, the eyes, the ears, the tongue and the skin. "We perceive colour by the eyes, taste by the tongue, sound by the ears, smell by the nose, and touch by the skin. All the knowledge that we acquire of any external object, is the effect of its colour, taste, sound, smell or touch, and nothing else. For instance, take a piece of gold. It looks yellow, it seems heavy to the touch, and it is elongated on being hammered. These and its other qualities which we perceive by means of our organs, is what is 'gold' in our eyes; and when these qualities are seen to recur in any particular object, then such object becomes an independent physical object named 'gold' in our opinion. Just as there are doors in a factory for taking material in from outside and for sending out the material, which is inside, so also, the organs of perception are the doors of human body for taking material inside and the organs of Action are the doors for sending that material out. When of the rays of Sun fall on any object and enter our eyes on being reflected, our Ātman perceives the colour of that object; and when the minute atoms of scent,

emanating from that that object come and strike our olfactory nerves, we smell it. The functions of the other organs of perception are carried on in the same way; and when the organs perception are functioning in

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this way, we become aware of the external objects in the world through their medium. But the organs of perception do not themselves acquire the knowledge of the activities which they carry on; and therefore, these organs of perception are not called 'jñātā' (Knower), but they have been referred to as the portals for taking in material from outside. When external material has come inside through these doors, the dealing with it afterwards is the function of the Mind. For instance, when at noon the clock strikes twelve, it is not the ears which understand what o'clock it is. Just as each stroke falls, aerial vibrations come and strike the ears, and when each of these strokes has in the first place created a distinct effect on the mind, we mentally calculate the sum of all these phenomena and decide what o'clock it is. Even the beasts have got the organs of perception, and as each stroke of the clock falls, it causes an effect on their mind through their ears. But their mind is not sufficiently developed to be able to total up the number of strokes and to understand that it is twelve o'clock. Explaining this in technical language, it is said that although a beast is capable of perceiving individual phenomena by

themselves, yet, it is not able to perceive the unity which results from that diversity. In the Bhagavadgītā, this is explained by saying: "indriyāṇi parāṇy āhuḥ indriyebhyaḥ param manah", (Gī. 3.42), i.e., "the organs are superior to the external objects, and the Mind is superior to all the organs". As has been stated above, if the Mind is not in its proper place, we do not see anything although the eyes may be open, nor do we hear anything though the ears may be open. In short, the external material comes into the factory of the Body through the organs of perception to the clerk called 'Mind', and this clerk subsequently examines that material. We will now consider how this examination is done, and how it becomes necessary to further sub-divide that which we have so far been broadly referring to as the 'Mind', or how one and the same Mind acquires different names according to difference in its functions.

All the impressions which are created on the mind through the organs of perception have first to be placed together in one place and by comparing them with each other, one has first to

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decide which of them are good and which bad, which acceptable- and which objectionable, which harmful and which beneficial and when this examination has been made,

we are induced to- do that thing which is good, beneficial, proper, or doable. This- is the ordinary course. For instance, when we go into a, garden, impressions of the various trees and flowers in it are made on our minds through our organs of perception. But unless our Ātman has acquired the knowledge of which of these flowers have a good smell and which a bad one, we do not get the desire of possessing a particular flower, and consequently perform the Action of plucking it.

Therefore,, all mental activity falls into the following three broad divisions, namely: (1) having acquired the knowledge of external objects by means of the organs of perception,, arranging all these impressions, or carefully classifying them for purposes of comparison, (2) after this classification has been made, critically examining the good or bad qualities of the different objects and deciding which object is acceptable and which not; and (3) when the decision has been made, feeling the desire to acquire the acceptable and reject the unacceptable, and getting ready for appropriate action. It is not that these three functions must take place immediately one after the other, and without there being any interval of time between them. We may in the present feel the desire of acquiring some object which we may have seen in the past; nevertheless we cannot, on that account, say that any one of these three functions is unnecessary. Just as though the Court of Justice is one and the same, the work in it is divided in the following way, namely, the two parties or their respective pleaders first place their respective evidence and witnesses

before the Judge, and the Judge gives his decision after considering the evidence on either side, and the Sheriff ultimately carries out the decision which has been given by the Judge, so also are the activities of that clerk whom we have so far broadly referred to as the 'Mind', divided. Out of these activities, the function of considering discriminatingly all the various objects which are perceived, and deciding that a particular thing is of a particular kind (evameva) and not of another kind (nānyathā), that is to say, the function of a Judge, belongs to the organ

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called 'Reason' (buddhiḥ); and all the mental functions referred to above, except the functions of this faculty of discriminating between good and evil, are carried out by the organ called 'Mind' (manas), according to the terminology of both the Vedānta and the Sāṃkhya philosophies (Sāṃ. Kā. 23 and 27). This (minor) Mind, like a pleader, places before the Reason the various ideas that a particular thing is like this (saṃkalpam) or is like that (vikalpam) etc., for decision; and therefore, it is called an organ which is 'saṃkalpa-vikalpātmakam', that is, which merely forms ideas without arriving at any decision. The word 'saṃkalpam' is sometimes made to include also the factor of decision (Chāndogya. 7.4.1.). But in this particular place, the word 'saṃkalpam', has been used to mean and include merely realising, or believing, or



taking for granted, or understanding that a particular thing as of a particular kind, or such activities as planning some Action, desiring, thinking, or conceiving, without arriving at ;any decision (niścayaḥ). But the function of the Mind is not .exhausted after placing various ideas for decision before the Reason in this way like a pleader. When the Reason has decided on the goodness or badness of any particular act, and has decided what is acceptable, the Mind has also to perform the Registrar's function of bringing about, through the organs of Action, that thing which has been found acceptable, that is to say, of carrying into execution the decisions of Reason; .and therefore, the Mind can also be defined in another way. It is true that considering how to carry into execution the decision which has been arrived at by the Reason is in a sense saṁkalpa-vikalpātmaka; nevertheless that process has been given the independent name 'vyākaraṇam', that is, 'development', In the Sanskrit language; all the other mental activities except these are the functions of Reason. The Mind does not discriminate between the various ideas in the mind. Discriminating between them and giving to the Ātman the accurate knowledge of any particular object, or deciding that a particular thing is only of a particular kind after proper classification, or arriving at a definite inference, and deciding as to the doability or non-doability of any particular Action after inferentially determining the relation of Cause and

Effect between two things, are all functions of the Reason and are known in Sanskrit as 'vyavasāyaḥ' or 'adhyavasāyaḥ'. Therefore, these two words have been defined in the Mahābhārata in the following way in order to show the difference between the Reason and the (minor) Mind, namely:—

"vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ mano vyākaraṇātmakam"  
(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 251. 11).

that is, "the 'buddhiḥ' (Reason) is an organ which does the vyavasāyaḥ, that is, which discriminates and arrives at a decision, and the Mind (minor) is an organ which does the vyākaraṇam, that is, carries out the development or the further arrangements. In short, the Reason "is vyavasāyātmikā and the mind is vyākaraṇātmakam". Even the Bhagavadgītā contains the words "vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ" (Gī. 2.44); and in that place, the word buddhiḥ means the organ which discriminates and decides. The buddhiḥ is like a sword. Its function is only to cut whatever comes before it or is brought before it. It has no other quality or function (Ma. Bhā. Vana. 181. 26). Planning, desiring, wanting, memory, perseverance, faith, enthusiasm, kindness, interestedness, affection, pity, gratitude, sexual impulses, shame, joy, fear, love, attachment, hate, avarice, arrogance, jealousy, anger etc., are all qualities or faculties of the Mind (Br. 1.5.3; Maitryu. 6, 30), and man is prompted to perform any particular act according to the particular mental impulse which has sprung into the Mind.

However reasonable a man may be, and even if he fully understands how poor people suffer, yet, if the feeling of pity is not aroused in his heart, he will never be inspired by the desire to help the poor; or, though he might feel the desire to fight, he will not fight if he is wanting in courage. The Reason only tells us what the result will be at those things which we want to do. But as desire, courage etc., are not the faculties of the Reason, Reason by itself, that is without the help of the Mind, never inspires the organs to do anything. On the other hand, though, the Mind can inspire the organs when under the sway of Anger etc., yet an Action which may have been performed without the discrimination of the Reason and merely by the inspiration of the mental

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impulses, will not necessarily be morally pure. For instance, if something is given in charity without exercising the Reason and merely under the impulse of the feeling of pity, there is a chance of its having evil effects if the charity is given to an undeserving person. In short, the mental impulses by themselves are blind without the help of Reason. Therefore, in order that any good Action should be performed by a man, there must be a combination of a Reason which is pure, that is to say, such as will arrive at a correct decision between good and bad, a Mind which will act according to the dictates of the Reason, and organs which are subject to the control of Mind.

Besides the words 'buddhiḥ' and 'manas' the other words 'antaḥkaraṇam' and 'cittam' are also in vogue. As the word antaḥkaraṇam out of these means the internal (i.e., antaḥ) organ (i.e., karaṇam or indriyam), it usually includes the manas (Mind), buddhiḥ (Reason), cittam (Consciousness) and ahaṁkāram (Egoism) etc.; and when the Mind first contemplates external objects, it becomes cittam, (i.e., Consciousness), (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 274.17). But, as in ordinary parlance these words are used as being synonymous, there is very often a confusion as to what meaning is intended in which place. In order that such a confusion should not arise only the two words Mind and Reason, out of the various words mentioned above, are used in scientific terminology in the specific meanings mentioned above. When in this way a differentiation has been made between the Mind and the Reason, the Reason in its capacity of a judge, necessarily becomes superior to the Mind, and the Mind becomes the clerk of the Reason. This is the purport of the following words, used in the Gītā, namely, "manasas tu parā buddhiḥ", i.e., 'the Reason is superior to or beyond the Mind' (Gī. 3.42). Nevertheless, even this clerk has, as mentioned above, to perform two. different functions; the first of these is to properly arrange all the impressions which have come from outside, through the medium of the organs of perception, and to place those impressions before the Reason for decision; and the second one is to carry "the order Or the message of the Reason to the organs of Action after the Reason has arrived at

a decision and make these organs perform those external  
Actions which

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are necessary to be performed for carrying out the decision of the Reason. Just as very often in a shop, the duty of purchasing merchandise for the shop and also the duty of sitting in the shop and selling the goods are both carried out by one and the same clerk, so also is the case with the Mind. Suppose, you see a friend of yours and being inspired with the desire of calling him, you say to him 'hullo!'; then, let us see what are the various functions which are carried out in your antaḥkaraṇam. First, your eyes, that is, the organ of perception, have sent a message to the Reason through the medium of the Mind that your friend is near you, and that knowledge is conveyed through the Reason to your Ātman. Here, the first function, namely, of the acquisition of knowledge, is over. Then the Ātman, through the medium of the Reason decides to call the friend; next, the desire to speak springs into the Mind in order to execute the decision of the Reason, and the Mind causes the word 'hullo!' to be uttered by the organ of Action. In the Śikṣā-grantha of Pāṇinī, the function of the utterance of words has been described on that basis as follows:—

ātmā buddhyā sametyārthān mano yuñkte vivakṣayā ।  
manaḥ kāyāgnim āhanti sa prerayati mārutam ।

mārutas tūraṣi caran mandraṃ janayati svaram ||

that is, "the Ātman in the first place grasps all things through the medium of the Reason, and creates in the Mind the desire to speak; then the Mind sets in action the bodily heat (kāyāgni) which in turn Bets the breath in motion; then this breath entering the chest, creates the lowest sound; and this sound ultimately comes out of the mouth in the shape of labial, guttural, or other sounds." The last two lines of the above stanza are also to be found in the Maitryupaniṣad (Maitryu. 7.11.); and from this it is clear, that this stanza must be older than Panini. [1] 'kāyāgni' is known in present-day medical

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science as 'nerves'. But according to that science, the nerves which bring in the perception of external objects are different from those which carry the message of the Reason to the organs of Action through the medium of the Mind; and therefore, according to Western medical scientists, we must have two kinds of Mind. Our philosophers have not thought that there are two kinds of Mind; they have differentiated between the Reason and the Mind, and have said that the Mind is dual, that is to say, where the organs of Action are

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[1] Max Müller has said that Maitryupaniṣad must be earlier in point of time than Pāṇinī. See Sacred Books of the East Series Vol. XV pp. xlvii–li. This matter has been more fully dealt with by me in the Appendices.

concerned it acts according to the organs of Action, and where the organs of perception are concerned, it acts according to those organs. Both these ideas are essentially the same. According to the points of view of both, the Reason is the judge who decides, and the Mind becomes saṁkalpa-vikalpātmakam, that is, performs the function of conceiving ideas in relation to the organs of perception, and becomes vyākaraṇātmakam. that is, executive, in relation to the organs of Action, that is to say, it becomes the actual provocator of the organs of Action. Nevertheless, in developing (i.e., making the vyākaraṇam of) anything, the Mind has very often to conceive ideas (that is, make saṁkalpam and vikalpam) in order to see in what way the dictates of the Reason can be carried out. Therefore, in defining the Mind, it is usual to say simply "saṁkalpa- vikalpātmakam manas"; but, it must not be forgotten, that even according to that definition, both kinds of functions of the Mind are included.

The definition of Reason given by me above, namely, that it is the organ which discerns, is intended only for the purpose of minute scientific discussions. But, these scientific meanings of words are always fixed subsequently. It is, therefore, necessary to consider here also the practical meanings which the word 'buddhiḥ' had acquired before this scientific meaning had been fixed. We cannot acquire the knowledge of anything unless it has been identified by the Pure Reason (vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ); and unless we have acquired the knowledge of that

object, we do not conceive the intention or the desire of obtaining it. Therefore, just as in ordinary parlance, the word 'mango' is applied both to the mango-tree and the mango-fruit, so also ordinary people very often use the single word 'buddhiḥ' (Reason) for signifying the Pure Reason

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(vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ), as also the fruits of that Reason in the shape of Desire etc. For instance, when we say that the buddhiḥ of a particular person is evil, we intend to say that his 'Desire' is evil. As 'Intention' or 'Desire' are both faculties of the Mind from the scientific point of view, it is not correct to refer to them by the word 'buddhiḥ'. But, before the word 'buddhiḥ' had been scientifically analysed, the word 'buddhiḥ' had begun to be used in ordinary parlance in the two meanings of (i) the organ which discerns and (ii) the Intention or Desire which subsequently arises in the human mind as a result of the functioning of that organ. Therefore just as the additional word 'tree' or 'fruit' is used when it is: intended to show the two different meanings of the word 'mango', so also, when it is necessary to differentiate between the two meanings of the word 'buddhiḥ', the 'buddhiḥ' which discriminates, that is to say, the technical 'buddhiḥ' is referred to by qualifying it by the adjective 'vyavasāyātmikā' and Desire is referred to as simply 'buddhiḥ' or at most as 'vāsanātmikā buddhiḥ'. In the Gītā the word 'buddhiḥ' has been used in both



the above meanings (Gī. 2.41, 44, 49 and 3.42); and in order to properly understand the exposition of the Karma-Yoga, both these meanings of the word 'buddhiḥ' have to be continually kept before the mind. When man begins to do any particular act, he first considers whether it is good, or bad, doable or not-doable etc., by means of his Pure Reason (vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ), and when the Desire or Intention (that is, the 'vāsanātmikā buddhiḥ) of doing that act enters his mind, he becomes ready to perform the act. This is the order of the mental functions. When that buddhiḥ out of the two (namely the vyavasāyātmikā) which has to decide between the doability and the non-doability of any particular Action is functioning properly, the Mind is not polluted by improper Desires (buddhiḥ) entering it. Therefore, the first theorem of the Karma-Yoga preached in the Gītā is that the vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ (Pure Reason) must be made pure and steady (Gī. 2.41). Not only the Gītā, but also Kant has differentiated between two kinds of buddhiḥ and he has described the functions of the vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ (Pure Reason) and of the vyavahārikā or vāsanātmikā buddhiḥ (Practical Reason) in

two different books. [1] Really speaking, steadying the Pure-Reason is the subject-matter of the Pātañjala Yoga-Śāstra,- and not of the Karma-Yoga Śāstra. But in considering any particular act, one must, according to the doctrine of the Gītā, first consider the desire or the vāsanātmikā buddhiḥ of the doer of the act, before one looks at the effect of the act (Gī. 2.49); and in the same way when one considers- the question of Desires it will be seen that the man whose pure Reason has not become steady and pure, conceives different shades of desire in his mind, and therefore), it is not certain that these desires will be always pure or holy (Gī. 2.41). And if the desires themselves are not pure, how will the resulting Action be pure?1 Therefore, one has to consider in detail, even in the science of Karma-Yoga, the methods or means which have to be employed to keep the vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ pure, and therefore, the Pātañjala Yoga has been, described in the sixth chapter of the Bhagavadgītā as one of the means by which the vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ can be made pure. But some doctrinal commentators have disregarded this fact and drawn the inference that the Gītā supports and" preaches the Pātañjala Yoga! From this it will be clear to my readers how necessary it is to bear in mind the above mentioned two meanings of the word 'buddhiḥ' and their mutual relation.

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[1] Kant calls the vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ Pare Reason; and the vāsanātmikā buddhiḥ Practical Reason and he has dealt with these two kinds of Reason in two separate books.

I have in this way explained what the respective functions of the Mind and the Reason are, after explaining the internal working of the human mind, and I have also mentioned the other meanings of the word 'buddhiḥ'. Having in this way differentiated between the Mind and the 'vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ' (Pure Reason), let us see how this aspect affects the question of the deity which discerns between good and evil (Sad-asad-viveka-devatā). As the only purpose which this deity serves is to choose between good and evil, it cannot be included in the (minor) Mind; and as there is only one

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'vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ' (Pure Reason) which considers all matters and comes to a decision on them, we cannot give an independent place for the sad-asad-vivecana śakti (power of discriminating between good and evil). There may be numerous matters about which one has to think, discriminate, and come to a conclusion. In commerce, war, civil or criminal legal proceedings, money-lending, agriculture, and other trades, there arise any number of occasions on which one has to discriminate. But, on that account, the vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ in each case does not become different. The function of discrimination is common to all these cases; and therefore, the buddhiḥ (Reason) which makes that discrimination or decision must also be one only. But in as much as the buddhiḥ is a bodily faculty (śārīra-dharma) just like the Mind, it can be

sāttvikī, rājasī, or tāmasī according to previous Actions, hereditary impressions, or education or for other reasons; and therefore, a thing which might be acceptable to the buddhiḥ of one person may be looked upon as unacceptable to the buddhiḥ of another person. But on that account, we cannot say that the organ of buddhiḥ is different in each case. Take for instance, the case of the eye some people have squint eyes, while others have half-closed eyes, and others one eye only, and some have dim vision, while others have a clear vision. But, on that account, we do not say that the eye is a different organ in each case, but say that the organ is one and the same. The same argument must be applied to the case of the buddhiḥ. That same buddhiḥ which differentiates between rice and wheat, or between a stone and a diamond, or which distinguishes between black and white, or sweet and bitter, also discriminates between what is to be feared and what not, what is good and what evil, what is profitable and what disadvantageous, what is righteous and what unrighteous, or what doable and what not-doable, and comes to a final decision in the matter. However much we may glorify it in ordinary parlance by calling it a 'Mental Deity' yet from the philosophical point of view, it is one and the same vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ (pure Reason). That is why in the 18th Chapter of the Gītā, one and the same buddhiḥ has been divided into the three kinds of sāttvikī, rājasī, and tāmasī

and the Blessed Lord first says to Arjuna:—

pravṛttim ca nivṛttim ca kāryākārye bhayābhave |  
bandham mokṣam ca yā veti buddhiḥ sā pārtha sāttvikī  
|| (Gī. 18.30)

that is, "that buddhiḥ which (properly) understands which Action should be begun and which not, which is proper to be performed and which not, what should be feared and what not, what leads to bondage and what to Release (mokṣa), is the sāttvikī buddhiḥ";

and then He goes on to say:—

yayā dharmam adharmaṁ ca kāryam cākāryam eva ca |  
ayathāvat prajānāti buddhiḥ sā Pārtha rājasī || (Gī.  
18.31)

that is, "that buddhiḥ which does not make a proper discrimination between the dharmam (righteous) and the adharmaṁ (unrighteous), or between the doable and the not-doable, that buddhiḥ is rājasī"; and He lastly says:—

adharmaṁ dharmam iti yā manyate tamasāvṛtā |  
sarvārthān viparītānś ca buddhiḥ sā Pārtha tāmasī ||  
(Gī. 18.32)

that is, "that buddhiḥ which looks upon that as righteous – (dharmam) which is unrighteous (adharmaṁ), that is to say, which gives a totally perverse, that is, contrary verdict on all

matters is the *tāmasī buddhiḥ*". From this explanation, it will be clear that the theory that there is an independent and distinct deity of which the function is *sad-asad-vivekaḥ*, (i.e., discrimination between good and evil) is not accepted by the *Gītā*. That does not mean that there can never exist a *buddhiḥ* (Reason) which will always choose the right thing. What is meant is that the *buddhiḥ* is one and the same, but the *sāttvika* quality of choosing only the right thing is acquired by it by previous impressions, or by education, or by control of the organs, or by the nature of the food which a man eats etc., and in the

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absence of such factors as previous impressions etc., that same *buddhiḥ* becomes *rājasī* or *tāmasī*, not only in the matter of the discrimination between the doable and the not-doable but also in all other matters. Such is the import of the above stanzas. The facts of the difference between the *buddhiḥ* of a thief and that of an honest man, or of persons belonging to different countries is explained by this theory in a satisfactory way, in which it cannot be explained by looking upon the Power of -discrimination between good and evil (*sad-asad-vivecana-śakti*) as an independent deity. "Making one's *buddhiḥ*, *sāttvikī*, is what one oneself can do; and it cannot be done without the control of the organs. So long as the *vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ* acts only according to the dictates of

the organs, without discriminating between or examining what promotes one's true benefit, it cannot be called Pure (śuddha); therefore, one must not allow the buddhiḥ to become the slave of the Mind and the organs, but one must on the other hand arrange it so that the Mind and the organs are under its control, This principle has been enunciated in numerous places in the Bhagavadgītā (Gī. 2.67, 68; 3.7, 41; 6.24, 36) and, on that account, the body, has been compared to a chariot in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad, and it is metaphorically stated that in order that the horses in the shape of the organs which pull that chariot should be properly guided in the path of the enjoyment of objects of pleasure, the charioteer in the shape of the vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ has to courageously keep taut and steady the reins in the shape of the Mind (Kaṭha. 3.3.9); and in the Mahābhārata also, the same simile has been adopted in two or three places with some slight difference (Ma. Bhā. Vana 210.25; Strī. 7.13; Aśva. 51.5). 'This simile is so proper for describing the function of the control of the organs, that the famous Greek Philosopher Plato has in his book (Phaedrus. 246) made use of the same illustration in describing the control of the organs. This illustration does not appear literally in the Bhagavadgītā. Yet, the description of the control of the organs in the above-mentioned stanzas has been made keeping this illustration in mind, as cannot but be noticed by anybody who keeps in sight the previous and posterior context of this subject-matter. Ordinarily, that is, when it is not necessary to make subtle

scientific distinctions, this is known as 'manonigraha' (control of the Mind); but when, as mentioned above, a distinction is made between the manas (Mind) and the buddhiḥ (Reason), the function of control falls to the share, not of the Mind, but of "the pure (vyavasāyātmikā) Reason. In order this vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ should become pure, the principle that there is only one Ātman in all human beings, must be deeply impressed on the mind by realising the true nature of the Parameśvara whether by the mental absorption (samādhi) taught in the Pātañjala Yoga, or by Devotion or by Knowledge (jñāna) or by Meditation (dhyāna). This is what is known as Self- devoted (ātma-niṣṭha) buddhiḥ. When the vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ has in this way become Self-devoted (ātmaniṣṭha), and the Mind and the organs have learnt to act according to its directions as a result of mental control, Desire, Intention, or other mental functions (manodharma) or the vāsanātmikā buddhiḥ (Practical Reason), naturally become pure and chaste, and the bodily organs naturally tend towards sāttvika actions. From the Metaphysical point of view, this is the foundation of all good actions, that is to say, the esoteric teaching (rahasya) of the science of Proper Action (Karma-Yoga).



My readers will now have realised why our philosophers have not accepted Conscience as an independent deity, in addition to the ordinary functions of the Mind and the Reason. From, their point of view, there is no objection to looking upon 'the Mind or the Reason as deities by way of glorification; but they have come to the conclusion that considering the matter scientifically, there is no third element like Conscience which is distinct from and in addition to the two things which we call manas (mind), and buddhiḥ (Reason) and which is inherent. We now clearly see the propriety of the word satām having been used in the phrase 'satām hi saṁdeha padeṣu' etc. Those whose minds are pure and Self-devoted (ātmaniṣṭha), need not at any time be afraid of consulting their Conscience (antaḥkaraṇa). We may even say that they should purify their Mind as much as possible before performing any Action, and consult their Conscience, But, there is no sense in dishonest people saying: "We do the same thing", because, the Conscience of both is not the same, and

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whereas the Conscience of saints is sātṭvika, that of thieves is tāmasa . In short, that which the Intuitionist School refers to as 'the Deity which discerns between Good and Evil' (the sad-asad-viveka-devata), is seen not to be an independent deity when the matter is considered from the philosophical point of view, but to be only the Self-devoted and the sātṭvika form of

the vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ This is the theory of our philosophers, and when this theory is accepted, the Intuitionist point of view naturally falls to the ground.

When we have thus seen that the Materialistic aspect is one-sided and insufficient, and also that the easy device found out by the Intuitionist school is ineffective, it becomes necessary for us to see whether or not there is some other way for justifying the doctrine of Karma-Yoga. This way is the Metaphysical aspect of the matter; because, when we have, once come to the conclusion that there is no such independent and self-created (svayāmbhū) deity like the sad-asad-viveka-buddhiḥ (Conscience), notwithstanding the fact that the Reason is superior to external Action, it becomes necessary to consider, even in the science of Karma-Yoga, how one can keep one's Reason pure in order that one should be able to perform pure Action, what is meant by Pure Reason, and how the Reason, can be made pure; and the consideration of these questions, cannot be complete unless one leaves aside the Material sciences which deal only with the external physical world, and enters into Metaphysics. Our philosophers have laid down the ultimate doctrine, in this matter, that the Reason, which has not fully realised the true and all-pervading nature of the Parameśvara, is not pure; and the science of the Highest Self (adhyātma) has been expounded in the Gītā solely in order to explain what this Self-devoted Reason (ātmaniṣṭha buddhiḥ) is. But, disregarding this anterior and posterior

context, some doctrinal commentators on the Gītā have laid down the conclusion that Vedānta is the principal subject-matter of exposition in the Gītā. It will be shown later on exhaustively that this conclusion arrived at by these commentators as to the subject-matter expounded in the Gītā, is not correct. I have for the time being only to show how it is necessary to consider the question of the Ātman when one wishes to find out how the

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Beason is to be purified. This question of the Ātman has to be considered from two points of view:— (1) the first method of exposition is to examine one's own body, ' (piṇḍaḥ, kṣetra, or śarīram), as also the activities of one's Mind, and to explain how as a result of such examination, one has to admit the existence of the Ātman in the shape of a kṣetrajña, or an owner of the Body (Gī. Chap. 13). This is known as the śārīraka-vicāra or the KṢETRA-KṢETRAJÑA-VICĀRA (the Consideration of the Body and the Ātman); and that is why the Vedānta-Sūtras are known as śārīraka (dealing with the Body) sūtras. When in this way we have examined our Body and Our Mind, we have next to consider (2) whether the elementary principle which is arrived at by such examination, and the principle which is arrived at by the examination of the brahmāṇḍam or the visible world around us, are the same or are different.' The examination of the world made in this way is known, as the

KṢARĀKṢARA-VICĀRA or the VYAKTĀVAYKTA-VICĀRA (the consideration of the Mutable and the Immutable, or the consideration of the Perceptible and the Imperceptible). The 'kṣara' or 'vyakta' is the name of all the mutable objects in the world, and akṣara or avyakta is the name of the essential and eternal element in the mutable objects in this creation (Gī. 8.21; 15.16). The fundamental Element which we discover by further examining these two elementary principles arrived at by the consideration of the Body and the Ātman and of the Mutable and the Immutable, and which is the Element from which both these elements have been evolved, and which is beyond (para) both of them, and is the Root Element of everything, is called the Absolute Self (Paramātmā) or the Puruṣottamaḥ (Gī. 8. 20): All these ideas are to be found in the Bhagavadgītā, and the science of Proper Action has been expounded in it by showing how the buddhiḥ is ultimately purified by the Realisation (jñānam) of this Element in the shape of the Paramātmā, which is the Root Cause of everything. If, therefore, we have to understand this method of exposition, we must also follow the path which has been followed in the Gītā. Out of these two subject-matters, the knowledge of the brahmāṇḍam or the consideration of the Mutable and the Immutable (kṣarākṣara) will be dealt with"

in the next chapter. I shall now complete the science of the piṇḍa, or the consideration of the Body and the Ātman which I had commenced in this chapter in order to explain the true nature of the Conscience, and which has remained incomplete.

I have finished my exposition of the gross Body made up of the five primordial elements, the five organs of Action, the five organs of Perception, the five objects of these five organs of Perception in the shape of sound, touch, colour, taste, and smell, the Mind which is the conceiver of ideas (saṃkalpa-vikalpa), and the Pure Reason (vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ). But that does not exhaust the consideration of the Body. The Mind and the Reason are the means or the organs for thought. If the gross Body does not possess movement (cetanā) in the form of Vitality (prāṇaḥ) in addition to these, it will be just the same whether the Mind and the Reason exist or not. Therefore, it is necessary to include one more element in the Body in addition to these other things, namely, Movement (cetanā). The word 'cetanā', is sometimes also used as meaning the same things 'caitanyam' (Consciousness). But one must bear in mind that the word cetanā has not been used in the sense of caitanyam in the present context, 'cetanā' here means the movement, activity, or the vital motion of the Life forces seen in the gross Body. That caitanyam (Power of Consciousness) by means of which movement or activity is created even in Gross Matter, is known as caitanyam; and we have now to consider what that Power is. That factor which gives rise to the distinction

between "mine", and "other's" which is to be seen in the Body in addition to its Vital activity or Movement, is a different quality altogether; Because, in as much as the Reason is only an organ which comes to a decision after proper consideration, Individuation (ahamkāraḥ), which is at the root of the distinction between one's and another's, must be looked upon as something different from Reason. Like and dislike, pain and happiness, and other correlative couplets (dvaṁdvam) are the properties of the Mind. But as the Nyāya school looks upon these as properties of the Ātman, Vedānta philosophy includes them among the properties of the Mind in order to clear that misunderstanding. In the same way, that fundamental element in the shape of Matter

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(prakṛti), from which the five primordial elements have sprung, is also included in the Body (Gī. 13.5, 6). That Power by which all these elements are controlled or kept steady, is again a different power (Gī. 18.33), and it is called 'dhṛti' (cohesion). ' That amalgamated product which results from the combination of all these things is scientifically called the 'savikāra śarīra' (activated Body), or 'kṣetra'; and this is what we, in ordinary parlance, call the activated (savikāra) human body, or the piṇḍa. I have defined the word 'kṣetra' in this way, consistently with the Gītā. But in mentioning the qualities Desire, Hate etc., this definition is sometimes more or less

departed from. For instance, in the conversation between Janaka and Sulabhā, in the Śānti parva (Śān. 320), the five organs of Action have not been mentioned in the definition of the Body, but instead of them the six qualities of Time-feeling (kāla), Realisation of Good and Evil (sad-asad-bhāvaḥ). Method (vidhiḥ), Vitality (śukram), and Strength (bala) have been mentioned. According to this classification, the five organs of Action have to be included in the five primordial elements, whereas according to the classification adopted in the Gītā, we are to include Time in the Ether (ākāśam), and Method, Vitality, Strength etc., in the five primordial elements or in Matter. Whatever may be the case, the word 'kṣetra' conveys only one meaning to everybody. That collection of mental and bodily elements or qualities in the shape of prāṇaḥ (Life force), which has specific activities (viśiṣṭa-cetanā), is known as 'kṣetra'. As the word 'śarīra' is also applied to dead bodies, the different word 'kṣetra' has been used in this particular place, 'kṣetra' originally means 'field', but in the present context, it has been used metaphorically as meaning the 'activated (savikāra) and living (sajīva) human body'. That which has been referred to by me above as a great factory is this 'kṣetra'. The organs of Perception, and the organs of Action, are the portals of this factory for taking in material from outside and for sending out the manufactured products respectively and, the Mind, the Reason, Individuation (ahaṁkāra), and Activity (cetanā) are the workmen in this factory; and all the functions

carried on or caused to be carried on by these workmen, are referred

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to as the activities (vyāpārāḥ), feelings (vikārāḥ), or properties (dharmāḥ) of this Body.

When in this way, the meaning of the word 'kṣetra' has. been defined, the next question which naturally arises is, to whom does this kṣetra or field belong, is there or is there not some owner for this factory? Although the word 'Ātman is very often used in the meaning of 'Mind' or 'Conscience' or 'one's Self', yet, its principal meaning is 'the owner of the Body (kṣetrājña)'. "Whatever functions are performed by man, and whether they are mental or bodily, are carried on by his internal organs such as buddhiḥ etc., his organs of Perception such as the eyes etc., and his organs of Action, such as hands,, feet, etc. In the whole of this group, the Mind and the Reason- are the most superior. But although they may, in this way, be superior to the other organs, yet they are both fundamentally the manifestations (vikārāḥ) of Matter (prakṛti) or of the gross Body, just like the other organs. (See the next chapter.) Therefore, although the Mind and the Reason may be the highest of all the organs, yet they cannot do anything beyond their particular functions, and it is not possible that they



should be able to do anything else. It is true that the Mind thinks and the Reason decides. But, knowing this, we do not arrive at a conclusion as to for whom the Mind' and the Reason perform these functions, or as to who performs- that synthesis which is necessary for obtaining a synthetic knowledge of the diverse activities carried on by the Mind: and the Reason on various occasions, or as to how all the organs subsequently receive the directions to perform their various functions consistently with that synthesis. It cannot be said that all this is done by the gross Body of man. Because, when 'cetanā' or activity leaves this gross Body, this gross Body is unable to perform these functions although it remains behind; and as the component parts of the gross Body, namely, the flesh, the muscles, etc., are the result of food, and these are continually worn out and continually reformed, it cannot be said that the feeling of sameness by which a person realises that "I", who saw a particular thing yesterday, am the same as the "I" who see a different thing to-day, is the property of the continually changing gross Body. If, however,

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one leaves aside the gross Body, and says that cetanā (Activity) is the owner of the body, then, in deep sleep, one does not continue to possess the 'I' feeling although such activities or cetanā as breathing or blood-circulation are going on. (Br. 1.1.15 – 18). It, therefore, follows that Activity or the

functioning of Life forces, is a specific quality which has been acquired by the gross Body, and is not the controlling factor, owner or power which synthesizes all the activities of the organs (Kaṭha. 5.5). The possessive case adjectival forms 'mine' or 'another's' prove to us the existence of the quality of Individuation (ahamkāraḥ). But by knowing that, we do not come to a conclusion as to who this 'aham' or 'I' is. If you say, that this 'I' is a pure illusion, then the experience of everybody is just the contrary; and imagining something which is inconsistent with this personal experience of everybody, would place one in the position described by Śrī Samarthā Rāmadāsa as: "saying something which is inconsistent with experience is wholly tiresome; it is as useless as opening one's mouth wide and crying" (Dāsa. 9.5.15); and even if we do this, the fact of the synthesis of the activities of the organs is not satisfactorily explained. Some go so far as to say that there is no such individual thing as 'I' but that the name 'I' should be given to the conglomeration or the fusion of all those elements, such as, the Mind, Reason, Activity, gross Body etc., which are included in the word 'kṣetra'. But we see by our own eyes, that by merely piling a piece of wood on another piece of wood, we cannot make a box.; nor is motion created in a watch by merely putting together all its various wheels. We cannot, therefore, say that activity arises by mere juxtaposition. Nobody need be told that the various activities of the kṣetra are not purely -foolish activities and that there is some specific intention or object in them. "Who is it that gives

this direction to the various workmen, such as, buddhiḥ etc., in the factory of the Body? Juxtaposition (saṁghātaḥ) means merely putting together. Although several things may be put together, it is necessary to thread them together in order that they should form one whole. Otherwise, they will become disorganised at any moment. We have now to

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see what this thread is. It is not that the Gītā does not accept the principle of conglomeration (saṁghātaḥ); but that is looked upon as part of the kṣetra (Gī. 13.6). We do not thereby get an idea as to who the kṣetrajña or the owner of the Body is. Some persons think, that conglomeration gives rise to some new quality. But this opinion itself is not correct; because, philosophers have after mature consideration come to the conclusion that that which was not in existence before, in some form or other, cannot come into existence anew (Gī. 2.16), But even if we keep this doctrine aside for a moment, the next question which naturally springs up is why should we not look upon the new quality which arises in the conglomeration, as the owner of the Body? To this, some Materialist philosophers, reply, that a substance cannot be different from its qualities, and that the qualities want some superintendence (adhiṣṭhānam), and, therefore, instead of looking upon the property acquired by the Aggregate as the owner of the Body, we look upon the Aggregate itself as such

owner. Very well; then why do you not say 'wood' instead of 'fire', or 'cloud' instead of 'electricity', or 'the earth' instead of 'the gravity of the earth' in ordinary parlance? If it is not disputed that there must be in existence some Power which is distinct from the Mind and the Reason in order that all the activities of the Body should be carried on systematically and according to some proper arrangement, then can we, because the seat of that Power is still unknown to us, or because we cannot properly explain the full nature of that Power or of that seat, say that that Power does not exist at all? No person can sit on his own shoulders; in the same way, it is absurd to say that an Aggregate (saṃghātaḥ) gives to itself the knowledge of itself. Therefore, we come to the emphatic conclusion even from the logical point of view, that THAT THING for the enjoyment or the benefit of which, the various functions of the Aggregate of the bodily organs etc. are carried on, must be something which is quite distinct from the Aggregate itself. It is true that this Element which is distinct from the Aggregate, is an element which cannot become an object of perception (jñeya) or become visible to itself like other objects in the creation, since it is self-enlightened. But, on that account, the fact of its existence

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cannot come into question; because, there is no rule that all objects must fall into the single category of the 'perceivable'

(jñeya). All objects fall into two categories, namely, the 'jñātā' and the 'jñeya', i.e., the Perceiver, and That which is perceived by the Perceiver, and if something does not fall into the second category, it can come into the first category and its existence is as fully established as the existence of the Perceivable. Nay, we may go further and say that in as much as the 5.tman, which is beyond the Aggregate (saṁghāta) is itself a Knower, there is no wonder that it does- not become the subject-matter of the knowledge which it acquires; and therefore, Yājñavalkya has said in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad, that "vijñātāram are kena vijānīyāt" i.e. "Oh! how can there be someone else, who can know That which knows everything?" (Br. 2.4.14). Therefore, one has to come to the ultimate conclusion, that there exists in this activated living Body some comprehensive and potent Power which is more powerful and more comprehensive than the various dependent and one-sided workmen in the Body who work in grades rising from organs like the hands and feet to Life, Activity, Mind and Reason; that this Power remains aloof from all of them, and synthesises the activities of all of them and fixes for them the direction in which they are to act, and is an ever-awake witness of all their activities. This doctrine has been accepted both by the Sāṁkhya and Vedānta philosophies, and the modern German philosopher Kant has shown by minutely examining all the activities of Reason that this is the doctrine which one arrives at. The Mind, the Reason, Individuation or Activity are all qualities or component parts of the Body, that

is, of the 'kṣetra'. The inspirer of these components is different from them, independent of them, and beyond them. "yo buddheḥ paratas tu saḥ" (Gī. 3.42), i.e., "It is beyond the grasp of the Reason". This is- what is known in the Sāṃkhya philosophy as 'puruṣa', and in Vedānta philosophy as 'kṣetrajña', that is to say, the Ātman which knows or controls the Body; and the actual experience which everyone has of the feeling that 'I am', is the most excellent proof of the existence of this Knower of the Body (Ve. Sū. Śāṃ. Bhā. 3.3.53, 54). Not only do all people think

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that 'I am not', but even if a person by his mouth utters the words: 'I am not', he thereby inferentially acknowledges the existence of the Ātman or the 'I' which is the subject of the predicate 'am not'. The Vedānta philosophy has been propounded only in order to explain as clearly as possible the fundamental, pure, and qualityless form of this kṣetrajña or Ātman, which manifests itself in this way in the body in the individuated and qualified form 'I' (Gī. 13. 4); nevertheless, this conclusion is not arrived at by merely considering the Body, that is to say, the kṣetra. I have stated before that we have to see what can be ascertained by considering the Cosmos (brahmāṇḍam) that is to say, the external world, in addition to consideration of the Body and the Ātman. This consideration of the Cosmos is known as 'kṣarākṣara-vicāra'. By considering

the Body and the Ātman, we come to know the fundamental element (kṣetrajña or Ātman) which exists in the kṣetra (the Body, or the piṇḍa) and by considering the Mutable and the Immutable (kṣarākṣara), we understand the fundamental element in the Cosmos (brahmāṇḍa), that is, in the external creation. When in this way, the fundamental elements of the Body (piṇḍa) and of the Cosmos (brahmāṇḍa) have been definitely and severally fixed, Vedānta philosophy, after further consideration comes to the conclusion that both these are uniform or one and the same, – or that **WHATEVER IS IN THE BODY (PIṆḌA), IS ALSO IN THE COSMOS (BRAHMĀṆḌAM)**.  
[1] This is the ultimate truth of the moveable and the

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immoveable Cosmos. When we realise that this kind of examination has been made even in the Western countries,

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[1] The classification made in our philosophy of kṣarākṣara-vicāra and kṣara-kṣetrajña-vicāra was not known to Green. Yet the exposition of Metaphysics made by him in the commencement of his book called Prolegomena to Ethics, has been made by him in a twofold way, namely, regarding the 'Spiritual Principle in Nature' and the 'Spiritual Principle in Man' ; and later on, he has shown the identity between the two. The kṣara-kṣetrajña-vicāra includes such, mental philosophies as Psychology etc., and the kṣarākṣara-vicāra includes such sciences as Physics, Metaphysics etc. and even Western philosophers have accepted the position that the nature of the Ātman has to be arrived at, after taking into consideration all these things.

and that the doctrines advanced by Western philosophers like Kant etc. are very much akin to the doctrines of Vedānta philosophy, we cannot but feel a wonder about the supermanly mental powers of those persons, who laid down these doctrines of Vedānta by mere introspection, in an age when the Material sciences were not so advanced as they are in the present day; hut we must not stop with feeling wonder about this matter, – we must feel proud of it.

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# **CHAPTER VII.**

## **THE KAPILA SĀM̐KHYA PHILOSOPHY OR THE CONSIDERATION OF THE MUTABLE AND THE IMMUTABLE.**

### **(KAPILA SĀM̐KHYA-ŚĀSTRA OR KṢĀRAKṢARA-VICĀRA).**

prakṛtiṁ puruṣaṁ caiva viddhy anādi ubhāv api | [1]

~ Gītā (13.20).

I have stated in the last chapter, that simultaneously with the consideration of the Body and the Lord or Superintendent of the Body – the kṣetra and the kṣetrajña one must also consider the visible world and the fundamental principle in it – the 'kṣara' (mutable) and the 'akṣara' (immutable) – and then go on to the determination of the nature of the Ātman. There are three systems of thought which scientifically consider the mutable and the immutable world. The first of these is the

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[1] " Know that both the prakṛti (Matter) and the puruṣa (Spirit) are eternal".

Nyāya school and the second one is the Kapila Sāṃkhya school. But the Vedānta philosophy has expounded the form of the Brahman in a third way altogether, after proving that the propositions laid down by both of those systems of thought are incomplete. Therefore, before considering the arguments advanced in the Vedānta philosophy, it is necessary for us to see what the ideas of the Nyāya school and of the Sāṃkhya school are. In the Vedānta-Sūtras of Bādarāyaṇācārya, the same method has been adopted, and the opinions of the Nyāya school and of the Sāṃkhya school have been refuted in the second chapter. Although the whole of this subject-matter cannot be given here, yet, I have in this and the next chapter given as much information about it as is necessary for understanding the mystic import of the Bhagavadgītā. The propositions laid down by the Sāṃkhya school are of greater importance than those laid down by the Nyāya school. Because, as Bādarāyaṇācārya has said (Ve. Sū. 2.1.12 and 2.2.17), though no respectable and

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leading Vedānta philosopher has accepted as correct the Nyāya doctrines laid down by the followers of Kaṇāda, yet, as many of the propositions of the Kapila Sāṃkhya-śāstra are to be found in the Smṛti writings of Manu and others and also in the Gītā, my readers must first become acquainted with them. Nevertheless, it must be stated right in the beginning that

though many ideas of the Sāṃkhya philosophy are to be found in the Vedānta philosophy, yet the readers must not forget that the ultimate doctrines laid down by the Sāṃkhya school and the Vedānta school are extremely different from each other. There has also been raised an important question, namely, whether the Vedāntists or the Sāṃkhya philosophers are the originators of those ideas which are common to the Vedānta and the Sāṃkhya philosophy. But it is not possible to go so deep into that subject-matter in this book. Possibly, the Upaniṣads (Vedānta) and the Sāṃkhya philosophy grew up side by side like two children, and the doctrines found in the Upaniṣads, which are similar to the Sāṃkhya doctrines, may have been independently arrived at by the writers of the Upaniṣads; or on the other hand, the writers of the Upaniṣads may have borrowed some of these doctrines from the Sāṃkhya philosophy; or thirdly, Kapilācārya may have improved upon the doctrines laid down by the ancient Upaniṣads according to his own opinions, and formulated the Sāṃkhya philosophy. All these three positions are possible. But taking into account the fact that though the Upaniṣads and the Sāṃkhya philosophy are both ancient, the Upaniṣads are the more ancient (Śrauta) of the two, the last supposition seems to be the most credible of the three. Whatever may be the truth, when one has once become acquainted with the doctrines laid down by the Nyāya and the Sāṃkhya schools of philosophy, it becomes easier to grasp the principles of Vedānta, especially of the Vedānta in the Gītā. Therefore, let

us first consider what the opinions of these two Smārta śāstras about the formation of the universe are.

Some persons have a wrong idea that the only object of Nyāya (i.e., Logic) is to decide what conclusions can subsequently be drawn by inference from some desired or given data and which of these inferences are correct, and which wrong, and why.

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Proving by means of inference etc. is a part of Logic. But that is not the most important part; classifying or enumerating the various things in the world, that is to say, the subject-matter of proof (apart from the question of proving them), finding out what are the fundamental classes or things under which all the substances in the world can be classified, as a result of the gradual evolution of things in the lower orders into things in the higher orders, finding out what their nature and qualities are, and how other things came into existence out of these things, and how all these things can be proved, and all such other questions are included in Logic. Nay, one may go further and say that this science has come into existence only for this purpose, and not merely for considering the question of inference. It is in this way that the Nyāya-sūtras of Kaṇāda are begun and worked out. The followers of Kaṇāda are known as

Kaṇādas. In their opinion the root cause of the world is Atoms. The definition of atoms given by Kaṇāda and the one given by Western natural scientists is the same. When after dividing and sub-dividing things you come to the stage when division is no more possible, you have reached the atom or 'paramāṇu' (parama + aṇu), that is, the ultimate entity. As these atoms coalesce, they acquire new qualities as a result of the union, and new things are created. There are also atoms of the Mind and of the Body, and when these unite, life results. The atoms of the earth, water, fire and air are fundamentally different from each other. The fundamental atoms of the earth, have four qualities, namely, form, taste, smell, and touch; those of water have three such qualities, those of fire, two, and those of air, only one. In this way the entire cosmos is from the very beginning filled with permanent and subtle atoms. There is no other root cause of the world except the atoms. The commencement (ārambha) of the mutual coalition or union of the original and permanent atoms results in all the perceptible things in the world coming into existence. This theory propounded by the Nyāya school regarding the creation of the perceptible universe is technically known as 'ārambha-vāda' (Theory of Commencement), and some followers of that school never go beyond this. There is a story about one of them, that when those who were

around him at the moment of his death, asked him to take the name of God, he uttered the words: "pīlavah! pīlavah! pīlavah!" – "atoms! atoms! Atoms!". Nevertheless, other followers of the Nyāya school believe that Īśvara is responsible for bringing about the fusion or union of atoms and they in that way complete the chain of the creation of the universe; and these are known as theistic Logicians. In the second subdivision of the second chapter of the Vedānta Sūtras (2.2.11 – 17), this Atomic theory, and immediately thereafter, also the theory that the Īśvara is merely the immediate cause (2.2.37 – 39) has been refuted.

Reading what is stated above regarding this Atomic theory, those of my readers who have studied English will at once think of the Atomic theory advanced by the modern chemist Dalton. But in the Western countries, the Atomic theory of Dalton has now been put into shade by the' Evolution theory of the well-known biologist Darwin. In the same way, in India in ancient times, the Sāṃkhya philosophy has put into the background the theories of Kaṇāda. Not only can the Kaṇāda school not explain satisfactorily how Activity was first imparted to atoms, but their theories cannot also- explain how the rising gradation of living things like trees, animals, and men came into existence, nor also how that which was lifeless became living, and several other things. This explanation was given in the 19th Century in the Western countries by Lamarque and Darwin, and in our country in ancient times by Kapila. The

summary of the opinions of both these- schools is that the Cosmos or universe came to be created by the bursting forth of the constituents of one original substance; and on this account, the Atomic theory lost ground in India in ancient times, and now in the Western countries. Similarly, modern physicists have now also proved that the atom is not indivisible. It was not possible in ancient times to prove the Atomic theory or the Evolution theory by analysing and examining various material objects in the world by means of physics and other natural sciences. Experimenting again and again on the various objects in the world, or determining their qualities by analysing them in various ways, or making a comparison between the organs of the bodies of numerous present

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and former living things in the living world, and such other present day devices of the natural sciences were not available to Kaṇāda or to Kapila. They have deduced their propositions from whatever material was before their eyes at the time. Still it is a matter of great surprise that the philosophical propositions laid down by the Sāṃkhya philosophers as to how the growth or formation of the universe must have come about are not much different from the scientific propositions laid down by modern natural scientists. As the knowledge of biology has grown, the material proof of these opinions can

now be given more logically, and by the growth of knowledge of the natural sciences, human beings have undoubtedly benefited to a considerable extent from the Material point of view. But in order to impress on the minds of my readers that the modern natural scientists cannot tell us much more than Kapila as to how diverse perceptible created things came into existence out of one imperceptible prakṛti (Matter), I have in various places later on referred shortly to the propositions laid down by Haeckel for comparison side by side with the propositions of the Kapila Sāṃkhya school. These propositions were not for the first time promulgated by Haeckel, and he has himself clearly admitted in his works that he was expounding his propositions on the authority of the works of Darwin, Spencer, and other previous natural scientists. Yet Haeckel has for the first time described succinctly and in an easily intelligible way all these various propositions, after properly co-ordinating them, in his book known as *The Riddle of the Universe*; and I have therefore, for the sake of convenience, taken Haeckel as the protagonist of all these natural scientists, and referred principally to his opinions in this and the next Chapter. I need not say that this reference is only brief, because it is not possible to consider those propositions in this book in greater detail, and those who want further information about them must refer to the original works of Spencer, Darwin, Haeckel and other scholars.



Before considering the Kapila Sāṃkhya philosophy, it must be mentioned that the word 'Sāṃkhya' is used in two different meanings. The first meaning is the Sāṃkhya

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philosophy expounded by Kapilācārya, and that meaning has been adopted in this Chapter and in one place in the Bhagavad- Gītā (Gī. 18.13). But besides this specific meaning, it is usual to include philosophy of every kind in the general name 'Sāṃkhya', and it also includes the Vedānta philosophy. In the phrase 'Sāṃkhya-niṣṭhā' or 'Sāṃkhya-yoga' this ordinary meaning of the word 'Sāṃkhya' is intended; and wherever the scientists who follow this niṣṭhā (doctrine) have been referred to as 'Sāṃkhya' in the Bhagavadgītā later on (Gī. 2.39; 3.3; 4.5; and 13.34), not only the followers of the Kapila Sāṃkhya school, but also the Vedāntists who have abandoned all Actions by ātmānātma-vicāra (by considering what does and what does not pertain to the Self); and who are .lost in the contemplation of the Brahman, are intended. As the word 'Sāṃkhya' comes from the root 'Saṃ-khyā' (calculation), its primary meaning is 'one who counts'; and etymologists say that, as the fundamental elements according to the Kapila philosophy are just twenty-five, the followers of that philosophy originally got the specific name of 'Sāṃkhya' (in the sense of " counters "), and later on the word 'Sāṃkhya' acquired the comprehensive meaning of philosophy of every

kind. I, therefore, think that after the practice of referring to Kapila ascetics as 'Sāṃkhya' had first come into vogue, Vedānta ascetics also later on came to be known by that name. Whatever may be the case, in order that confusion should not arise as a result of this double meaning of the word 'Sāṃkhya', I have used the elongated heading of 'Kapila Sāṃkhya-Śāstra' for this chapter. There are sūtras (Aphorisms) in the Kapila Sāṃkhya-Śāstra just as in the Kaṇāda Nyāya philosophy. But as neither Gaudapāda nor Śrī Śaṃkarācārya, who wrote the Śārīra-bhāṣya, have taken these sūtras as authorities in their works, many scholars are of opinion that they could not be ancient. The Sāṃkhya-Kārikā written by Īśvarakṛṣṇa is considered to be older than them. Gaudapāda, the chief preceptor of Śaṃkarācārya, has written a bhāṣya (Commentary) on that work and even in the Śaṃkarabhāṣya itself, extracts have been taken from these Kārikās, and the translation of that work into the Chinese language made before 570 A. D.

is now available. [1] Īśvarakṛṣṇa has stated at the end of these Kārikās, that he has in his work given a summary in seventy couplets in the āryā metre of a previous extensive- book of sixty chapters called Śaṣṭi-Tantra (omitting some chapters). The work Śaṣṭi-Tantra is now not available, and I have, therefore, considered the fundamental propositions of the Kapila Sāṃkhya-Śāstra on the authority of these Kārikās. In the Mahābhārata, the Sāṃkhya doctrines have been mentioned in many chapters. But as in that work, the Vedānta doctrines have been always mixed up with the Sāṃkhya doctrines, it becomes necessary to consider other treatises in order to decide what the pure Sāṃkhya philosophy was; and for that purpose, no work older than the Sāṃkhya-Kārikās is at present available. The pre-eminent worth of Kapila becomes clear from

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[1] Much information is now available about Īśvarakṛṣṇa from Buddhistic - works. The preceptor of the Buddhistic scholar Vasubandhu was a contemporary opponent of Īśvarakṛṣṇa and the history of this Vasubandhu written by Paramārtha (449 to 569 A. D.) in the Chinese language has now been published. Dr. Takakasu has, on the strength of this, come to the conclusion that Īśvarakṛṣṇa must have lived about 450 A. D. (See Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1905. p. 33 to 53). But according to Dr. Vincent Smith, Vasubandhu himself must be placed some- where in the 4th century (about 280 – 369 A. D.), because a translation of his works has been made in 404 A. D. into the Chinese language. When the date of Vasubandhu is in this way pushed back, the date of Īśvarakṛṣṇa is also pushed back to the same extent, that is to say, by about 200 years; and must be taken at about 240 A. D. (See Vincent Smith's Early History of India, 3rd Edition, p. 328.).

the following words of the Blessed Lord in the Gītā:  
"siddhānām Kapilo muniḥ" (Gī. 10.26), that is, "from among  
the Siddhas, I am the Kapila muni". Nevertheless, it is not  
known where and when Kapila Ṛṣi lived. There is a statement  
in the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata that Sanatkumāra,  
Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatsujāta, Sana, Sanātana and Kapila  
were the seven Mind-born sons of Brahmadeva, and that they  
were born with Knowledge (340.67); and in another place  
(Śān. 218), we find the Sāṃkhya

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philosophy explained to Janaka by Āsuri, the disciple of Kapila,  
and Pañcaśikha, the disciple of Āsuri. Again in the Śānti-parva  
(301.108, 109) Bhīṣma also says, that the science which was  
once propounded by Sāṃkhya about the formation of the  
universe is everywhere to be found " in the Purāṇas, in history  
and in books on political economy and other places". Nay, it  
may even be said that: "jñānam ca loka yad ihāsti kimcit  
Sāṃkhyāgatam tac ca mahan mahātman", that is, "all the  
knowledge in this, world originates in the Sāṃkhya  
philosophy" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 301. 109). When one considers in  
what way the Evolution theory is being everywhere taxed into  
commission by the Western writers, one should not be  
surprised if every one of our writers has to some extent or  
other drawn upon our ancient Sāṃkhya philosophy, which is a  
match for the Evolution theory. Stupendous ideas like the

theory of gravity of the earth, or the utkrānti-tattva [1] (Evolution theory) in the science of the creation, or the theory of the unity of Brahman and the Ātman, come into the mind of some superman once in a way in thousands of years. Therefore, the practice of expounding one's own arguments, on the authority of any universal doctrine or comprehensive theory accepted at the time, is seen followed in books in all countries.

This introduction has become necessary because the study of the Kapila Sāṃkhya philosophy is now out of date. Let us now consider what the principal propositions of the Kapila Sāṃkhya philosophy are. The first proposition of the – Sāṃkhya philosophy is that nothing new comes into existence in this world; because, only śūnya (nothing) and nothing else can be produced by śūnya (that is, which did not exist before). Therefore, it must always be taken for granted that all the

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[1] I have used the word 'utkrānti-tattva' here as meaning 'the Evolution theory' because it is used in that sense now-a-days. But 'utkrānti' means 'death' in Sanskrit. Therefore, in my opinion it would be more proper to use the expressions 'guṇavikāśa' (the expansion of the constituents), 'guṇotkarṣa' (the diffusion or growth of the constituents), 'guṇapariṇāma' (the development of the constituents) used in the Sāṃkhya philosophy for denoting the 'Evolution theory' instead of the term 'utkrānti-tattva'.

qualities which are to be seen in the created products (kārya) must be found at least in a subtle form in the kāraṇa from which the products were created (Sāṃ. Kā. 9). According to the opinions of Buddhists and of Kaṇāda, one thing is destroyed and out of it another thing comes into existence; for instance, the seed is destroyed, and from that the sprout comes into existence, the sprout is destroyed, and from that the tree comes into existence, and so on. But the Sāṃkhya and the Vedānta philosophers do not accept this proposition. They maintain that those elements which existed in the seed of the tree are not destroyed, but they have absorbed other elements into themselves from the earth and from the air, and thereby the new form or state of a sprout is taken up by the seed (Ve. Sū. Śāṃ. Bhā. 2.1.18). Similarly, even if wood is burnt, it is only transformed into smoke, ashes etc., and not that the elements in the wood are totally destroyed and a new thing in the form of smoke comes into existence. It is stated in the Chāndogyopaniṣad that: "katham asataḥ saḥ jāyeta?", i.e., "how can something which exists come out of something which never existed?" (Chān. 6.2.2). The fundamental Cause of the universe is sometimes referred to as 'asat' in the Upaniṣads (Chān. 3.19.1; Tai. 2.7.1). But Vedānta philosophy has laid down that that word is not to be interpreted as meaning 'a-bhāva' (non-existing) but as indicating only the non-existence of such a perceptible state as can be denoted by name or form (Ve. Sū. 2.1.16, 17). Curds can be made only out

of milk, not from water; oil comes out of 'til' (sesamum), not out of sand; from these and other actual experiences, one must draw the same conclusion; because, if one accepts the position that those qualities which do not exist in the kārāṇa (cause) can arise independently in the kārya (product), one cannot explain why it should not be possible to produce curds from water. In short, that which is now in existence cannot have come into existence out of something which originally did not exist. Therefore, the Sāṃkhya philosophers have laid down the proposition, that whatever product you may take, its present concomitants and qualities must in some form or other have been in existence in its original cause. This proposition is known as 'satkārya-vāda' (theory of some-

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thing being produced out of something which existed). Even modern natural scientists have laid down the proposition that the gross elements and the potential energy in all things are permanent, and whatever changes of form anything may go through, yet in the end the sum total of all material concomitants and of all potential energy in the world is always the same. For instance, even if we see a lamp burning and the oil disappearing, yet the atoms of oil are not totally destroyed, but continue to exist in the form of soot, smoke, or other subtle components; and, if all these subtle components are taken together and weighed, their weight will be the same as

the total weight of the oil and of all those other matters from the air which were mixed with it when it was burning; and it has now been proved that the same rule applies to potential energy. But although these two propositions of modern physics and of the Sāṃkhya philosophy may be apparently similar, yet it must not be forgotten that the proposition of the Sāṃkhya philosophy has reference only to the fact of one thing being created out of another thing, that is to say, it refers specifically to the theory of Causes and Effects, whereas the proposition of modern physics is much more comprehensive. The very important difference between these two propositions which has now been proved by actual experiments and mathematics, is that no quality in any product can arise out of any quality which was not in the cause, and what is more, that the material elements and the potential energy in the causes are in no way destroyed by reason of their having been transformed into products, and that the sum total of the weights of the material elements and the potential energy of any product in its various states is always the same, and is neither increased nor decreased. Looking at the matter from this point of view, it will be seen that the propositions which have been given at the commencement of the second chapter Of the Bhagavadgītā. (Gī. 2.16), such as: "nāsato vidyate bhāvaḥ". I e., "that which is not, will never come into existence" etc., have greater similarity with the proposition of modern physics, than with the mere satkāryavāda which deals with causes and products, though they apparently look like



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satkāryavāda. The purport of the above quotation from the Chāndogyopaniṣad is also the same. In short, the doctrine of satkāryavāda is acceptable to the Vedānta philosophy. Nevertheless, according to the Monistic (advaita) Vedānta philosophy, this proposition does not apply to anything beyond the qualified (saṁguṇa) universe, and how the qualified universe appears to have come into existence out of the qualityless (nirguṇa) must be explained in some other way. This theory of the Vedānta will be fully dealt with later on in the chapter on Metaphysics (adhyātma). As in this place we have to consider only how far the Sāṁkhya philosophers have gone, we will take for granted the doctrine of satkāryavāda and see how the Sāṁkhya philosophers have made use of it in dealing with the question of the Mutable and the Immutable.

When once this satkāryavāda is taken as proved, then, according to the Sāṁkhya science, the theory that the visible universe came into existence out of śūnya, there having been, nothing whatsoever in existence before, naturally falls to the ground. Because, śūnya means non-existing, and that which exists can never come into existence out of that which does not exist. Therefore, it becomes absolutely clear that the universe must have come into existence out of some

substance or other, and that all those constituents (guṇas) which we now see in the universe must have also been in this original substance. Now, if you look at the universe, many objects in it, such as trees, animals, men, stones, gold, silver, diamonds, water, air etc., are perceptible to our organs, and their forms and qualities are all different. The Sāṃkhya doctrine is that this diversity or difference is neither permanent, nor fundamental and that the fundamental substance in all things, or Matter, is only one. Modern chemists had analysed various objects and had originally arrived at 62 fundamental elements. But as the Western natural scientists have now proved that these 62 elements are not eternal and that there must have been someone fundamental substance from which the sun the moon, the earth, the stars, and the rest of the universe was created, it is not necessary to further labour this proposition. This original or fundamental substance at the root of all the things in the universe is known in Sāṃkhya philosophy as

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'PRAKṚTI'. Prakṛti means 'fundamental' and all things which subsequently arise out, of prakṛti are called 'vikṛti' or the vikāras (transformations) of the fundamental substance.

But though there is only one fundamental substance in all things, if this substance had also only one constituent quality, then according to the satkāryavāda, other qualities could not have arisen out of this one quality; whereas, looking at the stones, earth, water, gold, and various other things in the world, we find that they have numerous qualities. Therefore, the Sāṃkhya philosophers have first carefully considered the constituents of all the various things and divided these constituents into three classes, namely, the sattva, the rajas and the tamas, (the placid, the active and the ignorant). Because, whatever object may be taken, it naturally has two states, namely, its pure, unadulterated, or perfect state and the opposite of it, its imperfect state; and it is seen that its tendency is to move from its imperfect state to its perfect state. Out of these three states, the state of perfection is called by the Sāṃkhya philosophers the sāttvikī state, the imperfect state is called the tāmasī state, and the state of progression is called the rājasī state; and according to them the three qualities, sattva, rajas and tamas, are to be found from the very beginning in Matter (prakṛti), which is the fundamental substance of all things. Nay, it may even be said, that these three constituents together make up Matter. In as much the strength of each of these qualities is the same in the beginning, Matter is originally equable. This equability existed in the beginning of the world and will come again when the world comes to an end. In this equability, there is no activity and everything is at rest; but, later on, when these three

constituents begin to vary in intensity, various things spring out of Matter as a result of the progressive constituent, and the creation begins. Here the question arises as to how the difference arises in the intensity of the three constituents, sattva, rajas and tamas, which were originally equal in intensity. To this the reply of the Sāṃkhya philosophers is, that that is the inherent characteristic of Matter (Sāṃ. Kā. 61). Though Matter is gross, yet it carries out all this activity of its own accord. Out of these three constituents, knowledge

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or intelligence is the sign of the sattva, and the rajas constituent, has an inspirational tendency, that is to say, it inspires a person to do some good or evil act. These three constituents can never exist by themselves independently. In everything, there is a mixture of all the three constituents; and in as much as the mutual ratio of the three constituents in this mixture always varies, the fundamental Matter, though originally one, assumes the various forms of gold, earth, iron, water, sky, the human body etc. as a result of this diversity in constituents. As the intensity or proportion of the sattva constituent is higher than that of the rajas and tamas constituents in the object which we consider as sāttvika, all that happens is that these constituents being kept in abeyance are not noticed by us. But strictly speaking, it must be understood that the three constituents sattva, rajas and tamas

are to be found even in those objects which are sātṭvika by nature. There does not exist a single object which is purely sātṭvika, or purely rājasa or purely tāmasa. In each object, there is an internal warfare going on between the three constituents, and we describe a particular object as sātṭvika, rājasa, or tāmasa according to that one of these three constituents which becomes predominant. (Sām. Kā. 13; Ma. Bhā. Aśva-Anugītā-36 and Śān. 305). For instance, when in one's own body the sattva constituent assumes preponderance over the rajas and tamas constituents, Knowledge comes into being in our body and we begin to realise the truth about things and our mind becomes peaceful. It is not that in this mental condition, the rajas and the tamas constituents cease to exist in the body; but as they are repressed, they do not produce any effect. (Gī. 14.10). If instead of the sattva constituent, the rajas constituent assumes preponderance, then avarice arises in the human heart, and the man is filled with ambition and he is inspired to do various actions. In the same way, when the tamas constituent assumes preponderance over both the sattva and the rajas constituents, faults like sleep, idleness, confused memory etc. arise in the body. In short, the diversity which exists among the various objects in the world, such as gold, iron, mercury etc. is the result of the mutual warfare or diversity in intensity of the three constituents, sattva, rajas

and tamas. The consideration as to how this diversity arises when there is only one fundamental Matter is known as 'vijñāna'; and this includes all the natural sciences. For example, chemistry, the science of electricity, physics etc. are all diverse kinds of jñāna, that is, they are vijñāna.

This fundamental Matter, which is in an equable state, is 'AVYAKTA ', that is, not perceptible to the organs; and all the various objects which come into existence as a result of the mutual internal warfare of its sattva, rajas and tamas constituents, and become perceptible to the organs, that is to say, all which we see or hear or taste or smell, or touch, goes under the name of 'vyakta' according to the Sāṃkhya philosophy. 'VYAKTA' means all the objects which are definitely perceptible to the organs, whether they become perceptible on account of their form, or colour, or smell, or any other quality. Perceptible objects are numerous, and out of them, trees, stones etc. are GROSS (sthūla); whereas others like the Mind, Reason, Ether etc., though perceptible to the organs, are SUBTLE (sūkṣma). The word sūkṣma does not here have its ordinary meaning of 'small'; because, though ether is sūkṣma, it has enveloped the entire universe. Therefore, sūkṣma is to be taken to mean the opposite of 'sthūla', or even thinner than air. The words 'gross' or 'subtle' give one an idea about the conformation of the body of a particular thing; and the words 'vyakta' (perceptible) and 'avyakta' (imperceptible)

show whether or not a particular thing can be perceived by us in reality. Therefore, although two different things may both be subtle, yet one of them may be perceptible and the other imperceptible. For instance, though the air is subtle, yet as it is perceptible to the sense of touch, it is considered to be vyakta; and prakṛti (Matter), the fundamental substance of all things, being much more subtle than air itself, is not perceptible by any of the organs and is, therefore, avyakta. Here a question arises, namely: if prakṛti is not perceptible to any organ, then, what evidence is there that it exists? To this the reply of the Sāṃkhya philosophers is, that by considering the various objects, it is proved by inference by the law of 'satkāryavāda' that the root of all of them, though not actually perceptible to the organs, must nevertheless be in

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existence in a subtle form (Sāṃ. Kā. 8); and the Vedānta philosophers have accepted the same line of argument for proving the existence of the Brahman. (See the Śāṃkarabhāṣya on Kaṭha. 6.12, 13). When you once in this way acknowledge prakṛti to be extremely subtle and imperceptible, the atomic theory of the Nyāya school naturally falls to the ground. Because, even if atoms are considered imperceptible and innumerable, yet, in as much as each atom is, according to the Nyāya theory, an independent entity or part, the question as to what matter any two atoms are composed of still

remains. Therefore, the doctrine of the Sāṃkhya philosophy is, that in prakṛti there are no different parts in the shape of atoms, that it is consistent and homogeneous or unbroken in any part, and that it perpetually pervades everything in a form which is avyakta (that is, not perceptible to the organs) and inorganic. In describing the Parabrahman, Śrī Samartha Rāmadāsa Svāmī says in the Dāsabodha (Dā. 20.2.3.):—

"In whichever direction you see, it is endless; there  
"is no end or limit anywhere; there is one independent  
"homogeneous substance; there is nothing else".

The same description applies to the prakṛti of the Sāṃkhya philosophy. Matter, made up of three constituents, is imperceptible, self-created, and homogeneous, and it eternally saturates everything on all sides. The Ether, the air, and other different things came into existence afterwards; and although they may be subtle, yet they are perceptible; and 'prakṛti' which is the fundament or origin of all these is imperceptible, though it is homogeneous and all-pervading. Nevertheless, there is a world of difference between the Parabrahman of Vedānta philosophy and the prakṛti of Sāṃkhya philosophy; because, whereas the Parabrahman is Vitalising and unqualified, prakṛti is inactive (gross) and is qualified, since it possesses the sattva, rajas and tamas qualities. But this subject-matter will be more fully considered later on. For the moment, we have only to consider what the doctrines of the Sāṃkhya philosophy are. When the words sūkṣma, sthūla,



vyakta, and avyakta have been defined as above, one comes to the inevitable conclusion

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that in the beginning of the universe, every object is in the form of subtle and imperceptible prakṛti and that it afterwards becomes vyakta (perceptible to the organs), whether it is subtle or gross; and that at the time of pralaya (total destruction of the universe), when this its perceptible form is destroyed, it again becomes merged into imperceptible Matter and becomes imperceptible. And the same opinion has been expressed in the Gītā (Gī. 2.28 and 8.18). In the Sāṃkhya philosophy, this imperceptible Matter is also known as 'akṣara' (Immutable) and all things which are formed out of it are known as 'kṣara' (Mutable). 'kṣara' is not to be understood as meaning something which is totally destroyed, but only the destruction of the perceptible form is here meant, 'prakṛti' has also other names, such as, 'pradhāna' (fundamental), 'guṇakṣobhiṇī' (stirrer up of the constituents), 'bahudhānaka' (many-seeded), and 'prasava-dharminī' (generative). It is 'pradhāna' (fundamental), because, it is the fundamental root of all objects in the universe; it is 'guṇakṣobhiṇī' (stirrer up of constituents), because, it of its own accord breaks up the equable state of its three constituents (guṇas); it is 'bahudhānaka' (many-seeded), because, it contains the germs of differentiation between various objects in the shape of the

three constituents; and it is "prasava-dharminī " (generative), because, all things are born or come into existence out of it. That is why these different names are given to Matter. This prakṛti is known in Vedānta philosophy as 'Māyā' (Illusion) or an illusory appearance.

When all things in the world are classified under the two divisions of 'Perceptible' and 'Imperceptible' or 'Mutable' and 'Immutable', the next question which arises is into what categories the Ātman, the Mind, Intelligence, Individuation, and the organs, which have been mentioned in the last chapter on the kṣetra-kṣetrajña-vicāra, are to be put according to Sāṃkhya philosophy. The kṣetra and the organs being gross, they will of course be included in the category of the Perceptible. But how is one to dispose of the Mind, Individuation, Intelligence, and especially of the Ātman? The modern eminent European biologist Haeckel says in his books that

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the Mind, Intelligence, Individuation and the Ātman are all faculties of the body. We see that when the brain in a man's head is deranged, he loses memory and even becomes mad. Similarly, even if any part of the brain is deadened on account of a blow on the head, the mental faculty of that, part is seen

to come to an end. In short, mental faculties are only faculties of gross Matter and they can never be separated from gross Matter. Therefore, the mental faculties and the Ātman must be classified along with the brain in the category of the Perceptible. When you have made this classification,, the imperceptible and gross Matter is ultimately the only thing which remains to be disposed of, because all perceptible-objects have sprung out of this fundamental imperceptible- There is no other creator or generator of the world except prakṛti. When the Energy of the fundamental Matter (prakṛti) gradually increases, it acquires the form of caitanya (consciousness) or of the Ātman. This fundamental prakṛti is governed by fixed laws or rules like the satkāryavāda, and in accordance with those laws, the entire universe, as also man, is acting like a prisoner. Not only is the Ātman not something different from Matter, but it is neither imperishable nor independent; then, where is the room for salvation? The idea which a person has that he will do a particular thing- according to his own will is a total illusion; he must go where prakṛti (Matter or Nature) drags him. In short, as the late- Mr. Shankar Moro Ranade has stated in the 'Dhrupad' (stanza) at the commencement of the drama Kalahapurī –

"The world is a vast prison, all created beings are  
"prisoners, the inherent qualities of Matter are  
"shackles which nobody can break".

Haeckel's opinion is that this is the way in which the existence of the living and the non-living world goes on. And because

according to him the universe originates from a single, gross, and imperceptible prakṛti, he has named his doctrine advaita' (non-dualism) [1]. But in as much as this advaita

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doctrine is based on something which is gross, and as it incorporates everything within gross Matter, I have named it 'jaḍādvaita' (Gross Non-dualism) or Non-dualism based on the Natural sciences.

But the Sāṃkhya philosophy does not accept this Gross Non-dualism. They accept the position that the Mind, Reason and Individuation are qualities of Gross Matter which consists of the five primordial elements and consequently it is stated in the Sāṃkhya philosophy that Reason, Individuation, and other qualities gradually spring out of the fundamental imperceptible Matter. But according to the Sāṃkhyas, it is impossible that consciousness (caitanya) should spring out of gross Matter; not only that, but the words "I know a particular thing" cannot come to be used unless the one who knows, understands, or sees Matter, is different from Matter, in the same way as no one can sit on his own shoulders; and looking at the affairs of the world, it is the experience of everyone that

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[1] Haeckel's original word is 'Monism', and he has written an independent work on it.

whatever he knows or sees is different from himself. The Sāṃkhya philosophers have, therefore, come to the conclusion that the one who knows (jñātā) and that which is to be known (jñeya), the one who sees and that which is to be seen, or the one who sees prakṛti and Gross prakṛti must be two fundamentally different things (Sāṃ. Kā. 17). The one which has been described in the last chapter as the kṣetrajña, or the Ātman, is the one which sees, knows or enjoys, and it is known in the Sāṃkhya philosophy as PURUṢA (Spirit), or ' jña ' (jñātā). As this Knower is different from Matter, it follows that the Knower is inherently quality- less, that is, beyond the three constituents of prakṛti, namely, sattva, rajas and tamas; that the Knower does not go through any change of form and does nothing else except seeing and knowing, and that all the activity which is going on in the world is only the activity of prakṛti. In short, the doctrine of the Sāṃkhya philosophers is that if MATTER (prakṛti) is acetana (lifeless), SPIRIT (puruṣa) is sacetana (vitalised); if Matter is responsible for all activity, Spirit is apathetic and non-active; if Matter has three constituents, Spirit is unconstituted; if Matter is blind, Spirit is seeing; and that these two different elements in this world are eternal, independent, and self-created. And it is with reference to this

doctrine that the Bhagavadgītā first says: "prakṛtim puruṣaṁ caiva viddhy anādi ubhāv api", that is, "prakṛti and puruṣa are both without a beginning and are eternal" (Gī. 13.19), and then goes on to say: "kāryakāraṇa kartṛtve hetuḥ prakṛtir ucyate", i.e., the activities of the body and of the organs are carried on by prakṛti: and that, "puruṣaḥ sukhaduḥkhānāṁ bhoktṛtve hetur ucyate", i.e., "the puruṣa is responsible for our experience of pain and happiness". But although the doctrine, that prakṛti and puruṣa (Matter and Spirit) are both eternal, is acceptable to the Gītā, yet it must be borne in mind that the Gītā does not look upon these two elements as independent and self-created, as is done by Sāṃkhya philosophers.

Because, in the Gītā itself the Blessed Lord has referred to Matter as his Illusion (Gī. 7.14; 14.3); and as regards the Spirit, he has said:— "mamaivāṁśo jīvaloke" (Gī. 15.7), i.e., "It is a part of me". Therefore, the Gītā has gone further than the Sāṃkhya philosophy. But we will keep aside this aspect for the time being, and consider further what pure Sāṃkhya philosophy says.

According to Sāṃkhya philosophy, all the objects in the world are divided into three classes:— the avyakta (the fundamental Matter or nature), the vyakta (the forms taken by it), and the puruṣa (jñā), the Spirit or the Knower. But in as much as the form of perceptible objects out of these is destroyed at the time of pralaya (total destruction), imperceptible Matter (prakṛti) and Spirit (puruṣa) are the only two elements which

remain in the end; and in as much as it is a proposition of the Sāṃkhya philosophers, that these two fundamental principles are eternal and self-created, they are called 'dvaiti' (those who accept TWO principles). They do not accept any other fundamental principle besides Matter and Spirit, such as

Īśvara, Time, inherent Nature or anything else. [1] Because, in as much as

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[1] Īśvaraḥṣṇa was a total atheist (nirīśvaravādī). He has stated in the last three summarising āryā couplets of his Sāṃkhya-Kārikā, that there were 70 āryās (couplets) in the Sāṃkhya-Kārikā on the principal subject-matter. But in the edition which has been printed in Bombay by Tukārām Tātyā, which contains the translations of Colebrooke and Wilson, there are only 69 āryās on the principal subject. Therefore, Mr. Wilson was necessarily faced with the question which this 70th couplet was; but that couplet not having been available to him, his difficulty has remained unsolved. In my opinion, this couplet must be after the present 61st couplet. Because, the commentary of Gaudapāda on the 61st couplet is not on one couplet, but on two couplets. And if the symbolical phrases in this commentary are taken and a verse is written, it will run as follows:

kāraṇam īśvaram eke bruvate kālaṃ pure svabhāvaṃ va |

prajāḥ katham nirṇato vyaktaḥ kālaḥ svabhāvaś ca ||

And this verse fits in with the anterior and posterior context. I think that someone has subsequently omitted this āryā, as it supports atheism. But as this ultra-critical man who has omitted the original couplet, forgot to delete the commentary on the verse which was omitted, we can now reconstruct that verse. For this, we must be grateful to this officious man. It would appear from the first hymn of the sixth chapter of the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad, that in ancient times, people used to look upon Inherent Nature and Time as the fundamental causes of the world and the Vedāntists used to go further and to look upon the 'Īśvara' as



according to that philosophy the qualified Īśvara, Time, or inherent Nature are all perceptible, they are included in the perceptible objects which arise out of imperceptible Matter; and if you look upon the Īśvara as qualityless, then having, regard to the law of satkāryavāda, Matter with its three constituents cannot spring out of a qualityless fundamental element. Therefore, they have definitely laid down that there is no third fundamental element in addition to prakṛti and puruṣa as a cause of the universe; and having in this way defined only two fundamental elements, they have according to their own opinion worked out how the entire universe was created out

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of these two fundamental elements. They say that though the qualityless puruṣa (Spirit) is unable to do anything itself, yet, in the same way as the cow gives milk for its calf, or iron acquires the quality of attraction by the proximity of a magnet, so also immediately on the puruṣa coming into union with prakṛti,

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such cause. That hymn is as follows:—

svabhāvam eke kavayo vadanti kālaṁ tathānye parimuhyamānāḥ ।

devasyaiṣā mahimā tu loke yenedaṁ bhrāmyate brahmacakram ॥

And in order to show that not even one of these three were accepted by the Sāṁkhya philosophers as a fundamental Cause, Īśvarakṛṣṇa put the couplet mentioned above after the 61st. couplet.

prakṛti which was originally imperceptible begins to place before the puruṣa the subtle, and the gross perceptible diffusion of its own constituents (Sām. Kā. 57). Although the puruṣa may be sacetana (vitalised) and a jñātā, (knower), yet, in as much as it is kevala (isolated), that is, qualityless, it has not got the necessary perquisites for performing actions itself; and although prakṛti can perform actions, yet, in as much as it is gross and acetana (lifeless), it cannot understand what to do and what not to do. Therefore, just as when there is a partnership between a blind man and ft lame man, the lame man sits on the shoulders of the blind man, and both of them begin to follow tits road, so also when lifeless Matter becomes united with the vitalised Spirit, all the activities in the world come in m existence (Sām. Kā. 31): and just as in a drama an actress ones takes one part and' after some time again another part and performs her dance for the entertainment of the audience, so also prakṛti for the benefit of the puruṣa (for 'puruṣārtha'), and though the puruṣa gives nothing in return, takes up numerous parts in the drama by changing the mutual ratio of the sattva, rajas, and tamas constituents, and continually performs its dance before the puruṣa (Sām. Kā. 59). But so long as the Spirit, being entranced by this dance of Matter or by false pride (Gī. 3.37) unjustifiably arrogates to itself this activity of Matter, and enmeshes itself in the strands of pain and happiness, it will never attain salvation. But on that day, when the Spirit realises that Matter with its three constituents is different and that it, the Spirit, is something

different, the Spirit may well be said to be released, (Gī. 13.29, 30; 14.20). Because, strictly speaking, the Spirit is fundamentally neither a doer nor is it bound. It is independent and by its very nature isolated, that is, it is non-active.

Whatever happens is being done by Matter. Nay, in as much as the Mind and even Reason are manifestations of Matter, whatever knowledge is acquired by Reason is the result of the

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activity of Matter. This knowledge is three-fold, namely sāttvika, rājasa and tāmasa (Gī.18.20 – 22). Out of these, when Reason acquires the sāttvika kind of knowledge, the Spirit realises that it is different from Matter. The sattva, rajas and tamas constituents are the constituents of Matter, not of the Spirit. The Spirit is qualityless and prakṛti with its three constituents, is its mirror (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 204.8). When this mirror becomes clear, that is to say, when the Reason, which is a manifestation of Matter, become sāttvika, then the Spirit sees in this clear mirror its own clear identity, namely, that is different from Matter, and Dame Matter, becoming shamefaced, stops her dance before the Spirit. When this state is acquired, the Spirit is released from all bonds and attains its inherent isolation. Isolation (kaivalya) means the state of being kevala (isolated), that is being single and not being joint with Matter. It is this natural state of the Spirit which is called mokṣa (release) or salvation by the Sāṃkhya philosophers. But

some philosophers have raised the subtle question whether in this state, it is the Spirit which abandons Matter or Matter which abandons the Spirit. This question is of the same type as the question whether the wife is too tall for the husband or the husband too short for the wife, and same may think it is equally useless. Because when two things are divorced from each other, there is no point in considering who has left whom, as we see that both leave each other. But, if one gives this question of the Sāṃkhya philosophers deep consideration, it will be seen not to be improper from their point of view. According to the Sāṃkhya philosophy, the Spirit being qualityless, non-active, and apathetic, the performance of the actions of giving up or sticking to cannot technically speaking be ascribed to the Spirit (Gī. 13.21, 32). Therefore, the Sāṃkhyas have come to the conclusion that it is Matter, (which has got the quality of activity), which much be said to leave the Spirit. It is prakṛti which obtains its own Release from the Spirit (Sāṃ. Kā. 62 and Gī. 13.34). In short, Release is not an independent state which results to the Spirit from some outside agency, nor it is a state which is different from its fundamental and inherent state; just as the

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outer skin of a stick of grass is different from the internal stock, or as the fish in water is different from the water, so are the Matter and Spirit related towards each other. Ordinary

persons, being steeped in ignorance as a result of the constituents of Matter, do not realise this distinction and remain tied up within the periphery of family affairs. But he who has released this distinction may well be said to be released. It is stated in the Mahābhārata that such a person is called a 'knower' or 'buddha' (wise) or 'kṛtakṛtya', i.e., "one who has done whatever ought to have been done." (See, Ma. Bhā. Śān. 194.58; 248.11 and 306.308). And the meaning of the word 'buddhimān' (intelligent) in the sentence "etad buddhvā buddhimān syāt", i.e., "by understanding this a man becomes 'buddhimān' or 'buddha', that is, becomes a knower" (Gi. 15.20), is the same. The true form of Release even according to the science of the Atman (adhyātma) is also the same (Ve. Sū. Śāṁ. Bhā. 1.1.4). But the advaita (Monistic) Vedānta philosophers give a different explanation about it: instead of saying that the Spirit is inherently isolated, they say that in as much as the Atman is fundamentally of the form of the Parabrahman (Supreme Spirit), Mokṣa is the realisation by the Atman of its fundamental form, namely of the Parabrahman. This difference between the Sāṁkhya philosophers and the Vedānta philosophy will be made clear in the next chapter.

Although the advaita (Monistic) Vedānta Philosophy fully accepts the Sāṁkhya theory that the spirit is qualityless, apathetic, and inactive, yet the other doctrine of the Sāṁkhya philosophy, namely there are fundamentally innumerable

independent Spirits which see the dance of one and the same Matter is not acceptable to Vedāntists (Gi. 8.4; 13.20 – 22); Ma. Bhā. Śān. 351; and Ve. Sū. Śām. Bhā. 2.1.1). According to the Vedānta philosophy, living beings appear different as a result of difference of environment; but as a matter of fact, everything is Brahman. According to the Sāṃkhya philosophers, in as much as the life and death, and the family of every man is different, and in as much as one comes across this difference in the world that one man is happy and another man is unhappy, every Atman or puruṣa must be originally different from another, and their number is innumerable (Śām. Kā. 18). Matter and Spirit are the two different fundamental principles of the entire universe. The Sāṃkhya philosophers interpret the word Spirit as meaning a collection of innumerable Spirits. They say that the world goes on as a result of the union between these innumerable Spirits and Matter with its three constituents. When each Spirit becomes united with Matter, it places before the Spirit the diffusion of its constituents, and the Spirit goes on enjoying it. After this has gone on for a long time, when in the case of a particular Spirit, the activity of prakṛti takes the sāttvika (placid) form, that Spirit alone (not all Spirits) acquires true knowledge and the activity of Matter comes to an end so far as it is concerned. It reaches its fundamental isolated state. But even if it attains salvation, the worldly life of the other Spirits continues. Some people are likely to think that when a Spirit reaches the state of isolation, it must at once escape from meshes of Matter.

But, according to the Sāṃkhya philosophers such is not the case. The body and the organs which are the manifestations of Matter do not leave it till the body dies. The reason given by the Sāṃkhya philosophers for this is: "in the same way as the wheel of the potter goes on revolving for same time as a result of previous motion, even after the pot on it has been finished and taken away from it, so also even that man who has attained the state of isolation continues to exist for some time" (Sāṃ. Kā. 67). But the man who has attained that the isolated state is not in any way obstructed, nor does he experience either pain or pleasure or happiness, on account of his body. This body, which is a manifestation of gross or lifeless Matter, is in itself gross or lifeless, man looks upon both pain and pleasure or happiness as same. If it is said that the Spirit will be affected by pain or pleasure then, as it has realised that it is different from the activity of Matter, and that the entire activity is of Matter and not of its own, it remains apathetic, howmuchsoever active Matter may continue, that man who has not acquired this knowledge by transcending the three constituents of Matter, does

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not escape the cycle of birth and death; then he may take birth in the sphere of gods, as a result of the preponderance of the sattva constituent or in the sphere of humans, as a result of the preponderance of the rajas constituent, or in the sphere of

animals, as a result of the preponderance of the tamas constituent (Sāṃ. Kā. 44, 54). These results, in the shape of the cycle of birth and death, befall a man as a result of the preponderance or minimisation of the sattva, rajas and tamas constituents in the Matter which envelopes him, that is, in his Reason. It is stated even in the Gītā (Gī. 14.18), that:—"ūrdhvaṃ gacchanti sattvsthāḥ", that is, "persons in whom the sāttvika constituent predominates go to heaven", and tāmasa parsons go to perdition. But these resulting states in the shape of heaven etc., are non-permanent. For that Spirit which wishes to become released from the cycle of birth and death, or according to the terminology of the Sāṃkhya philosophy, which has to maintain its difference or isolation from Matter, there is no other way except transcending the "three constituents and becoming virakta (desireless). Kapilācārya had acquired this asceticism and Knowledge from his very birth. But it is not possible that every man can be in this state from the moment of his birth. Therefore, everyone must by means of the discrimination of fundamental principles realise the difference between Matter and Spirit and try to purify his Reason. When by such efforts, the Reason becomes sāttvika, there arise in that Reason itself the qualities of Realisation (jñāna), Asceticism (vairagya), and Power (aiśvarya), and the man ultimately reaches isolation. The word 'aiśvarya' (power) is used here in the sense of the Yogic power of acquiring whatever may be desired. According to the Sāṃkhya philosophy, Righteousness (dharma) is included in



the sāttvika constituent; but Kapilācārya has ultimately made the distinction, that by mere dharma one acquires only heaven, whereas Knowledge and Asceticism give Release or Isolation, and effect a total annihilation of the unhappiness of a man. That man who, as a result of the preponderance of the sāttvika constituent in his bodily organs and in his Reason, has realised that he is distinct from Matter with its three constituents, is called triguṇātīta (one who has transcended the sattva

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rajas and tamas constituents) by the Sāṃkhyas. In this state of a triguṇātīta, neither the sattva, nor the rajas, nor the tamas constituent continues to exist; therefore, considering the matter minutely, one has to admit that this state is different from either the sāttvikī, or rājasī, or tāmasī states of mind; and following this line of argument the Bhāgavata religion, after dividing Devotion (bhakti) into ignorant, progressive, or placid, has described the disinterested and non-differentiating devotion of the man who has transcended the three constituents as nirguṇa, that is, unaffected-by-quality (Bhāg. 3. 29. 7 – 14). But it is not proper to extend the principle of division beyond the three divisions of placid, progressive, and ignorant. Therefore, the Sāṃkhya philosophers include the triguṇātīta state of transcending the three constituents in the placid (sāttvika) state on the basis that it results from the

highest expansion of the placid constituent; and the same position has also been accepted in the Gītā. For instance, the non-differentiating knowledge that everything is one and the same is, according to the Gītā, placid knowledge (Gī. 18.20); and where the description of the sāttvikī state of mind is given in the fourteenth chapter of the Gītā, the description of the state of transcending the three constituents is given later on at the end of the same chapter. But it must be borne in mind that in as much as the Gītā does not accept the duality of Matter and Spirit, the words 'prakṛti', 'puruṣa', 'triguṇātīta', which are technical terms of Sāṃkhya philosophy are always used in a slightly different meaning in the Gītā; or in short, the Gītā permanently keeps the rider of the monistic (advaita) Para-brahman on the Dualism (dvaita) of the Sāṃkhya philosophy. For instance, the difference between Matter and Spirit according to the Sāṃkhya philosophy has been described in - the 13th chapter of the Gītā (Gī. 13.19 – 34). But there the words 'prakṛti' and 'puruṣa' are synonymous with the words 'kṣetra' and 'kṣetrajña'. Similarly, the description in the 14th chapter of the state of transcending the three constituents (Gī. 14.22 – 27) is of the siddha or released man who, having escaped the meshes of Māyā (Illusion) with its three constituents, has realised the Paramātman (Supreme Spirit) which

is beyond both Matter and Spirit, and not of a Sāṃkhya philosopher, who looks upon Matter and Spirit as two distinct principles and who looks upon the isolation of the Spirit as the state of transcending the three constituents of Matter. This difference has been made perfectly clear by me in the subsequent chapter on adhyātma (philosophy of the Highest Self). But as the Blessed Lord has, while supporting the adhyātma or Vedānta philosophy in the Gītā, in many places made use of the Sāṃkhya terminology and arguments, one is likely to get the wrong idea, while raiding the Gītā, that it accepts as correct the pure Sāṃkhya philosophy. Therefore, I have repeated here this difference between the Sāṃkhya philosophy and the propositions similar to it in the Gītā. Śaṃkarācārya has stated in the Vedānta Sūtra-bhāṣya, that he is prepared to accept all the propositions of the Sāṃkhya philosophy but not to give up the advaita theory of the Upaniṣads that there is only one fundamental principle in the world, namely, the Parabrahman (Supreme Spirit), which is beyond both Matter and Spirit and from which the entire creation, including Matter and Spirit, has sprang (Ve. Sū. Śāṃ. Bhā. 2.1.3); and the same line of argument applies to the arguments in the Gītā.

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# CHAPTER VIII.

## THE CONSTRUCTION AND THE DESTRUCTION OF THE COSMOS.

guṇā guṇeṣu jāyante tatraiva niviśanti ca । [1]

~ Mahābhārata, Śānti. (305.23).

I have so far dealt with the nature of the two independent fundamental principles of the world according to the Kapila Sāṃkhya philosophy, namely. Matter and Spirit, and have described how one has to release one's Self from the network of the constituent qualities of Matter which it places before one's eyes, as a result of its union with Spirit. But the explanation of how this 'Saṃsāra' (worldly illusion) is placed by Matter before the Spirit— this its diffusion, or its drama which Marathi poets have given the vivid name of 'saṃsṛticā pīṃgā' (the fantastic dance of worldly life), and which is called "the Mint of Matter" by Jñāneśvara Mahārāja – and in what way the same is destroyed, has still to be given; and I shall deal

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[1] "Constituents (guṇas) are born out of constituents, and are merged in them".

with that subject in this chapter. This activity of Matter is known as "the Construction and Destruction of the Cosmos" , because, according to the Sāṃkhya philosophy, prakṛti (Matter) has created this world or creation for the benefit of in- numerable Spirits. Śrī Samartha Rāmdāsa has in two or three places in the Dāsabodha given a beautiful description

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of how the entire Cosmos is created from Matter, and I have taken the phrase "Construction and Destruction of the Cosmos" from that description. Similarly, this subject-matter has been dealt with principally in the seventh and eighth chapters of the Bhagavadgītā, and from the following prayer of Arjuna to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the beginning of the eleventh chapter, namely: "bhavāpyayau hi bhūtanāṃ śrutau vistaraso mayā" (Gī. 11.2), i.e., "I have heard (what You have said) in detail about the creation and the destruction of created beings; now show me actually Your Cosmic Form, and fulfill my ambition", it is clearly seen that the construction and the destruction of the Cosmos is an important part of the subject-matter of the Mutable and the Immutable. The Knowledge by which one realises that all the perceptible objects in the world, which are more than one (are numerous), contain only one fundamental imperceptible substance, is called 'jñāna' (Gī. 18.20); and the Knowledge by which one understands how the various innumerable perceptible things severally came into existence

out of one fundamental imperceptible substance is called 'vijñāna'; and not only does this subject-matter include the consideration of the Mutable and the Immutable, but it also includes the knowledge of the Body and the Ātman and the knowledge of the Absolute Self.

According to the Bhagavadgītā, Matter does not carry on its activities independently, but has to do so according to the will of the Parameśvara (Gī. 9.10). But, as has been stated before, Kapila Ṛṣi considered Matter as independent. According to the Sāṃkhya philosophy, its union with Spirit is a sufficient proximate cause for its diffusion to commence. Matter needs nothing else for this purpose. The Sāṃkhyas say that as soon as Matter is united with Spirit, its minting starts; and just as in spring, trees get foliage and after that, leaves, flowers, and fruits follow one after the other (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 231.73; and Manu. 1.30), so also is the fundamental equable state of Matter disrupted, and its constituents begin to spread out. On the other hand, in the Veda-Saṃhitās, the Upaniṣads, and the Smṛti texts, the Parabrahman is looked upon as fundamental instead of Matter, and different descriptions are found in those books about the creation of the Cosmos from

that Parabrahman (Highest Brahman), namely that:  
"hiraṇyagarbhaḥ samavartatāgre bhūtasya jātaḥ patir eka  
āsīt", i.e., "the Golden Egg first came into existence" (Ṛg.  
10.121.1). and from this Golden Egg, or from Truth, the whole  
world was created (Ṛg. 10.72; 10.190); or first, water was  
created (Ṛg. 10.83.6; Tai. Brā. 1.1.3.7; Ai. U. 1.1.2), and from  
that water, the Cosmos; or that when in this water an egg had  
come into existence, the Brahmadeva was born out of it, and  
either from this Brahmadeva, or from the original Egg, the  
entire world was later on created (Manu. 1.8 – 13; Chān. 3.19);  
or that the same Brahmadeva (male) was turned, as to half of  
him, into a female (Br. 1.4.3; Manu. 1.32); or that Brahmadeva  
was a male before water came into existence (Kaṭha. 4.6); or  
that from the Parabrahman only three elements, were  
created, namely, brilliance, water and the earth (food), and  
that later on, all things were created as a result of the inter-  
mixture of the three (Chān. 6.2 – 6). Nevertheless, there is a,  
clear conclusion in the Vedānta-Sūtras (Ve. Sū. 2.3.1 – 15), that  
the five primordial elements, namely. Ether (ākāśa) etc., came  
into existence in their respective order from the fundamental  
Brahman in the shape of the Ātman (Tai. U. 2. 1); and there are  
clear references in the Upaniṣads to prakṛti, mahat, and Other  
elements, e. g., see Kaṭha (3.11), Maitrāyaṇī (6.10),  
Śvetāśvatara (4.10; 6.16) etc. From this it can be seen that  
though according to Vedānta philosophy, Matter is not  
independent, yet after the stage when a transformation makes  
its appearance in the Pure Brahman in the shape of an illusory



Prakṛti, there is an agreement between that philosophy and the Sāṃkhya philosophy about the subsequent creation of the Cosmos; and it is, therefore, stated in the Mahābhārata that: "all knowledge which there is in history or in the Purāṇas, or in economics has all been derived from Sāṃkhya philosophy" (Śān. 301.108, 109). This does not mean that the Vedāntists or the writers of the Purāṇas have copied this knowledge from the Kapila Sāṃkhya philosophy; but only that everywhere the conception of the order in which the Cosmos was created is the same. Nay, it may even be said that the word 'Sāṃkhya' has been used here in the comprehensive meaning of 'Knowledge'. Nevertheless,

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Kapilācārya has explained the order of the creation of the Cosmos in a particularly systematic manner from the point of view of a science, and as the Sāṃkhya theory has been principally accepted in the Bhagavadgītā, I have dealt with it at length in this chapter.

Not only have modern "Western materialistic philosophers accepted the Sāṃkhya doctrine that the entire perceptible Cosmos has come out of one avyakta (imperceptible to the organs), subtle, homogeneous, unorganised, fundamental substance, which completely pervades everything on all sides,

but they have come to the further conclusions that the energy in this fundamental substance has grown only gradually, and that nothing has come into existence suddenly and like a spout, giving the go-bye to the previous and continuous order of creation of the universe. This theory is called the Theory of Evolution. When this theory was first enunciated in the Western countries in the last century, it caused there a great commotion. In the Christian Scriptures, it is stated that the Creator of the world created the five primordial elements and every living being which fell into the category of moveables one by one at different times, and this genesis was believed in by all Christians before the advent of the Evolution Theory. Therefore, when this doctrine ran the risk of being refuted by the Theory of Evolution, that theory was attacked on all sides, and that opposition is still more or less going on in those countries. Nevertheless, in as much as the strength of a scientific truth must always prevail, the Evolution Theory of the creation of the Cosmos is now becoming more and more acceptable to all learned scholars. According to this theory, there was originally one subtle, homogeneous substance in the Solar system, and as the original motion or heat of that substance gradually became less and less, it got more and more condensed, and the Earth and, the other planets gradually came into existence, and the Sun is the final portion of it which has now remained. The Earth was originally a very hot ball, same as the Sun, but as it gradually lost its heat, some portion of the original substance remained in the liquid form,

while other portions became solidified, and the air and water which surround the earth and the gross, material earth under them.

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'Came gradually into existence; and later on, all the living and non-living creation came into existence as the result of the union, of these three. On the line of this argument, Darwin and other philosophers have maintained that even .man has in this way gradually come into existence by evolution from micro-organisms. Yet, there is still a great deal of difference of opinion between Materialists and Meta-physicians as to whether or not the Soul (Ātman) should be considered as an independent fundamental principle. Haeckel -and some others like him maintain that the Soul and Vitality have gradually come into existence out of Gross Matter, and support the jaḍādvaita (Gross Monistic) doctrine; on the other hand, Metaphysicians like Kant say that in as much as all the knowledge we get of the Cosmos is the result of the synthetic activity of the Soul, the Soul must be looked upon as an independent entity. Because, saying that the Soul which perceives the external world is a part of the world which is perceived by it, or that it has come into existence out of the world, is logically as meaningless as saying that one can sit on one's own shoulders. For the same reason, Matter and Spirit are looked upon as two independent principles in the Sāṃkhya

philosophy. In short, it is even now being maintained by many learned scholars in the Western countries that however much the Materialistic knowledge of the universe may grow, the consideration of the form of the Root Principle of the Cosmos must always be made from a different point of view. But my readers will see that as regards the question of the order in which all perceptible things came to be created from one Gross Matter, there is not much difference of opinion between the Western Theory of Evolution, and the Diffusion- out of Matter described in the Sāṃkhya philosophy; because, the principal proposition that the heterogeneous perceptible Cosmos (both subtle and gross) came to be gradually created from one imperceptible, subtle, and homogeneous fundamental Matter, is accepted by both. But, as the knowledge of the Material sciences has now considerably increased, modern natural scientists have considered as prominent the three qualities of motion, heat and attraction, instead of the three qualities of sattva, rajas, and tamas of the Sāṃkhya philosophy.

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It is true that from the point of view of the natural sciences, it is easier to realise the diversity in the mutual strength of heat or attraction than the diversity in the mutual intensity of the three qualities of sattva, rajas, and tamas. Nevertheless,, the principle: " guṇā guṇeṣu, vartante" (Gī. 3.28), i.e.,

"constituents come out of constituents", which is the principle of the diffusion or expansion of constituent qualities, is common to both. Sāṃkhya philosophers say that in the same way as a folding-fan is gradually opened out, so also when the folds of Matter in its equable state (in which its sattva, rajas, and tamas constituent qualities are equal) are opened out, the whole perceptible universe begins to come into- existence; and there is no real difference between this conception and the Theory of Evolution. Nevertheless, the fact that the Gītā, and partly also the Upaniṣads and other Vedic texts have without demur accepted the theory of the growth of the guṇas (constituents) side by side with the Monistic Vedānta doctrines, instead of rejecting it as is done by the Christian religion, is a difference which ought to be kept in mind from the point of view of the Philosophy of Religion.

Let us now consider what the theory of the Sāṃkhya philosophers is about the order in which the folds of Matter are un-folded. This order of unfoldment is known as 'guṇotkarṣa-vāda' (the theory of the unfolding of constituent qualities), or 'guṇā- pariṇāma-vāda' (the theory of the development of qualities). It need not be said that every man comes to a decision according to his own intelligence to perform an act or that he must first get the inspiration to do an act, before he commences to do the act. Nay, there are statements even in the Upaniṣads, that the universe came to be created after the One fundamental Paramātman was

inspired with the desire to multiply, e. g., "bahu syāṁ prajāyeya" (Chān. 6.2.3; Tai. 2.6). On the same line of argument, imperceptible Matter first comes to a decision to break up its own equable state and to create the perceptible universe. Decision means 'vyavasāya', and coming to a decision is a sign of Reason. Therefore, the Sāṁkhya philosophers have come to the conclusion that the first quality which comes into existence in Matter is Pure (deciding) Reason (vyavasāyātmikā buddhi). In short, in the

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same way as a man has first to be inspired with the desire of doing some particular act, so also is it necessary that Matter-should first be inspired with the desire of becoming diffuse. But because man is vitalised, that is to say, because in him there has taken place a union between the Reason of Matter and the vitalised Spirit (Ātman), he understands this deciding Reason which inspires him; and as Matter itself is non-vital or Gross, it does not understand its own Reason. This is the great difference between the two, and this difference is the result of the Consciousness which Matter has acquired as a result of its union with the Spirit. It is not the quality of Gross Matter. When one bears in mind that even modern Materialistic natural scientists have now begun to admit that unless one credits Matter with some Energy which, though non-self-intelligible (asvayamvedya), is yet of the same nature as

human intelligence, one cannot reasonably explain the mutual attraction or repulsion seen in the material world in the shape of gravitation, or magnetic attraction or repulsion, or other chemical actions, [1] one need not be surprised about the proposition of the Sāṃkhya philosophy that Reason is the first quality which is acquired by Matter. You may, if you like, give this quality which first arises in Matter the name of Reason which is non-vitalised or non-self-perceptible

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(asvayamvedya). , But it is clear that the desire which a man gets and the desire which inspires Matter belong originally to one and. the same class; and, therefore, both are defined in

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- [1] "Without the assumption of an atomic soul, the commonest and the most general phenomena of Chemistry are inexplicable. Pleasure and pain, desire and aversion, attraction and repulsion, must be common to all atoms of an aggregate; for the movements of atoms which must take place in the formation and dissolution of a chemical compound can be explained only by attributing to them Sensation and Will" – Haeckel in the *Perigenesis of the Plastidule* cited in Martineau's *Types of Ethical Theory*, Vol. II, p. 399, 3rd Ed. Haeckel himself explains this statement as follows: "I explicitly stated that I conceived the elementary psychic qualities of sensation and will which may be attributed to atoms to be unconscious – just as unconscious as the elementary memory which I, in common with the distinguished psychologist Ewald Hering, consider to be a common function of all organised matter, or more correctly the living substances" – *The Riddle of the Universe*, Chap. IX p. 63 (R. P. A. Cheap. Ed.).

the same way in both the places. This Reason has also such other names as 'mahat', 'jñāna', 'mati', 'āsurī', 'prajña', 'khyāti' etc. Out of these, the name 'mahat' (first person singular masculine, mahān, i.e., 'big ') must have been given because Matter now begins to be enlarged, or on account of the importance of this quality. In as much as this quality of 'mahān' or Reason is the result of the admixture of the three constituent qualities of sattva, rajas, and tamas, this quality of Matter can later on take diverse forms, though apparently it is singular. Because, though the sattva, rajas and tamas constituents are apparently only three in number, yet, in as much as the mutual ratio of these three can be infinitely different in each mixture, the varieties of Reason which result from the infinitely different ratios of each constituent in each mixture can also be infinite. This Reason, which arises from imperceptible Matter, is also subtle like Matter. But although Reason is subtle like Matter, in the sense in which the words 'perceptible', 'imperceptible', 'gross', and 'subtle' have been explained in the last chapter, yet it is not imperceptible like Matter, and one can acquire Knowledge of it. Therefore, this Reason falls into the category of things which are 'vyakta' (i.e., perceptible to human beings); and not only Reason, but all other subsequent evolutes (vikāra) of Matter are also looked upon as perceptible in the Sāṃkhya philosophy. There is no imperceptible principle other than fundamental Matter.



Although perceptible Discerning Reason thus enters imperceptible Matter, it (Matter) still remains homogeneous. This homogeneity being broken up and heterogeneity being acquired is known as 'Individuation' (pṛthaktva) as in the case of mercury falling on the ground and being broken up into small globules. Unless this individuality or heterogeneity comes into existence, after Reason has come into existence, it is impossible that numerous different objects should be formed out of one singular Matter. This individuality which subsequently arrives as a result of Reason is known as 'Individuation' (ahamkāra), because, individuality is first

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expressed by the words 'I – you', and saying 'I – you' means 'ahamkāra', that is, saying 'aham' 'aham' ('I' 'I'). This quality of Individuation which enters Matter may, if you like, be called a non-self-perceptible (asvayamvedya) Individuation, But the Individuation in man, and the Individuation by reason of which trees, stones, water, or other fundamental atoms spring out of homogeneous Matter are of the same kind; and the only difference is that as the stone is not self-conscious, it has not got the knowledge of 'aham' ('I'), and as it has not got a mouth, it cannot by self-consciousness say 'I am different from you'. Otherwise, the elementary principle of remaining separate individually from others, that is, of consciousness or of Individuation is the same everywhere. This Individuation has

also the other names of 'taijasa', 'abhimāna', 'bhūtādi, and 'dhātu'. As Individuation is a sub-division of Reason it cannot come into existence, unless Reason has in the first instance come into existence. Sāṃkhya philosophers have, therefore, laid down that Individuation is the second quality, that is, the quality which comes into existence after Reason. It need not be said that there are infinite varieties of Individuation as in the case of Reason, as a result of the differences of the sattva, rajas and tamas constituents. The subsequent qualities are in the same way also of three infinite varieties. Nay, everything which exists in the perceptible world falls in the same way into infinite categories of sāttvika, rājasa and tāmasa ; and consistently with this proposition, the Gītā has mentioned the three categories of qualities and the three categories of Devotion (Gī. Chap. 14 & Chap. 17).

When Matter, which originally is in an equable state, acquires the perceptible faculties of Discerning Reason and Individuation, homogeneity is destroyed and it begins to be transformed into numerous objects. Yet, it does not lose its subtle nature, and we may say that the subtle Atoms of the Nyāya school now begin to come into existence. Because, before Individuation came into existence, Matter was unbroken and unorganised. Reason and Individuation by themselves are, strictly speaking, only faculties. But, on that account the above proposition is not to be understood as

meaning that they exist independently of the substance of Matter. What is meant is,

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that when these faculties enter the fundamental, homogeneous, and organised Matter, that Matter itself acquires the form of perceptible, heterogeneous, and organised substance. When fundamental Matter has thus acquired the faculty of becoming transformed into various objects by means of individualization, its further development falls into two categories. One of these is the creation consisting of life having organs, such as trees, man etc., and its other is of the world consisting of unorganised things. In this place the word 'organs' is to be understood as meaning only "the faculties of the organs of organised beings". Because, the gross body of organised beings is included in the gross, that is, unorganised world, and their 5lman falls into the different category of 'Spirit'. Therefore, in dealing with the organised world, Sāṃkhya philosophy leaves out of consideration the Body and the Atman, and considers only the organs. In as much as there can be no third substance in the world besides organic and inorganic substances, it goes without saying that Individuation cannot give rise to more than two categories. As organic faculty is more powerful than inorganic substance, the organic world is called sātṭvika, that is, something which comes into existence as a result of the preponderance of the sattva

constituent; and the inorganic world is called tāmāsa, that is something which comes into existence as a result of the preponderance of the tamas constituent. In short, when the faculty of Individuation begins to create diverse objects, there is sometimes a preponderance of the sāttvika constituent, leading to the creation of the five organs of Perception, the five organs of Action, and the Mind, making in all the eleven fundamental organs of the organic world; and at other times, there is a preponderance of the tamas constituent, whereby the five fundamental Fine Elements (tanmātra) of the inorganic world come into existence. But in as much as Matter still continues to remain in a subtle form, these sixteen elements, which are a result of Individuation, are still subtle elements [1]

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The Fine Elements (tanmātras) of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell – that is to say, the extremely subtle fundamental

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[1] If I were to convey this import in the English language, I would say:– The Primeval matter (Prakriti) was at first homogeneous. It resolved (Buddhi) to unfold itself, and by the principle of differentiation( Ahāṁkāra) became heterogeneous. It then branched off into two sections-one organic (Sendriya) and the other inorganic (Nirindriya). There are eleven elements of the organic and five of the inorganic creation. Purusha or the observer is different from all these and falls under none of the above categories.

forms of each of these properties which do not mix with each other – are the fundamental elements of the inorganic creation, and the remaining eleven organs, including the Mind, are the seeds of the organic creation. The explanation given in the Sāṃkhya philosophy as to why there are -only five of the first kind and only eleven of the second kind deserves consideration. Modern natural scientists have divided the substances in the world into solid, liquid, and gaseous. But the principle of classification of substances according to Sāṃkhya philosophy is different. Sāṃkhya philosophers say that man acquires the knowledge of all worldly objects by means of the five organs of Perception; and the peculiar construction of these organs is such that any one organ perceives only one quality. As the eyes cannot smell, the ears cannot see, the skin cannot distinguish between sweet and bitter, the tongue does not recognise sound, and the nose cannot distinguish between black and white. If the five organs of Perception and their five objects, namely, sound, touch, sight, taste, and smell, are in this way fixed, one cannot fix the number of the properties of matter at more than five. Because, even if we imagine that there are more than five such properties, we have no means to perceive them. Each of these five objects of sense can of course be sub-divided into many divisions. For example, though sound is only one object of sense, yet, it is divided into numerous kinds of sound, such as small, large, harsh, hoarse, broken or sweet; or, as described in the science of music, it may be the note B or E or C etc.; or according to grammar, it

may be guttural, palatal, labial etc.; and similarly, though taste is in reality only one object of sense, yet, it is also divided into many kinds such as, sweet, pungent, saltish, hot, bitter, astringent, acid etc.; and although

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colour is in reality only one object of sense, it is also divided: into diverse colours such as white, black, green, blue, yellow, red etc.; similarly even if sweetness is taken as a particular kind of taste, yet. the sweet tastes of sugarcane, milk, jaggery, or sugar are all different divisions of sweetness; and if one makes different mixtures of different qualities, this diversity of qualities becomes infinite in an infinite number of ways. But, whatever happens, the fundamental properties of substance can never be more than five; because, the organs of Perception are only five in number and each of them perceives only one object of sense. Therefore, although we do not come across any object which is an object of sound only or of touch only, that is, in. which different properties are not mixed up, yet, according to- Sāṃkhya philosophy, there must be fundamentally only five distinct subtle tanmātra modifications of fundamental. Matter, namely, merely sound, merely touch, merely colour, merely taste, and merely smell – that is, the fine sound element (śabda-tanmātra), the fine touch element (sparśa-tanmātra), the fine colour element (rūpa -tanmātra), the fine taste element (rasa-tanmātra) and the fine smell

element (gandha-tanmātra), I have further on dealt with what the writers of the Upaniṣads have to say regarding the five Fine Elements or the five primordial elements springing from them.

If, after having thus considered the inorganic world and come to the conclusion that it has only five subtle fundamental elements, we next consider the organic world, we likewise come to the conclusion that no one has got more than eleven organs, namely, the five organs of Perception, the five organs of Action and the Mind. Although we see the organs of hands, feet etc., only in their gross forms in the Gross Body, yet, the diversity of the various organs cannot be explained, unless we admit the existence of some subtle element at the root of each of them. The western Materialistic theory of Evolution has gone into a considerable amount of discussion on this question. Modern biologists say that the most minute fundamental' globular micro-organisms have only the organ of skin, and that from that skin other physical organs have come into existence one by one. They say, for instance, that the eye came into existence as a result of the contact of light with the

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skin of the original micro-organism; and that, similarly, the other gross organs came into existence by the contact of light

etc. This doctrine of Materialistic philosophers is to be found even in Sāṃkhya philosophy. In the Mahābhārata there is a description of the growth of the organs consistent with the tenets of Sāṃkhya philosophy, as follows:—

śabdarāgāt śrotram asya jāyate bhāvitātmanah |  
rūparāgāt tathā cakṣuḥ ghrāṇam gandhajighṛkṣayā ||  
(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 313.16).

that is, "When the Ātman in a living being gets the desire of hearing sound, the ears come into existence; when it gets the desire of perceiving colour, the eyes are formed; when it gets the desire of smelling, the nose is created". But the Sāṃkhya philosophers say that though the skin may be the first thing- to come into existence, yet, how can any amount of contact of the Sun's rays with the skin of micro-organisms in the living world give rise to eyes – and that too in a particular portion of the body – unless fundamental Matter possesses an inherent possibility of different organs being created? Darwin's theory only says that when one organism with eyes and another organism without eyes have been created, the former lives longer than the latter in the struggle for existence of the material world, and the latter is destroyed. But the Western Materialistic science of biology does not explain why in the first place the eyes and other physical organs at all come into existence. According to the Sāṃkhya philosophy, these various organs do not grow one by one out of one fundamental organ, but when Matter begins to become heterogeneous as a result



of the element of Individuation, such Individuation causes the eleven different faculties or qualities, namely, the five organs of Perception, the five organs of Action and the Mind, to come into existence in fundamental Matter, independently of each other and simultaneously (yugapat); and thereby, later on, the organic world comes into existence. Out of these eleven organs, the Mind is dual, that is, it performs

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two different functions, according to the difference in the organs with which it works, as has been explained before in the sixth chapter: that is to say, it is discriminating and classifying (saṁkalpa-vikalpātmaka) in co-operation with the organs of Perception and arranges the various impressions experienced by the various organs, and after classifying them, places them before Reason for decision; and it is executive (vyākaraṇātmaka) in co-operation with the organs of Action, that is to say, it executes the decisions, arrived at by Reason with the help of the organs of Action. In the Upaniṣads, the organs themselves are given the name of 'Vital Force' (prāṇa); and the authors, of the Upaniṣads (Muṇḍa 2.1.3), like the Sāṁkhya philosophers, are of the opinion that these vital forces are not the embodiment of the five primordial elements, but are individually born out of the Paramātmā (Absolute Self). The number of these vital forces or organs is stated in the Upaniṣads to be seven in some places and to be ten, eleven,

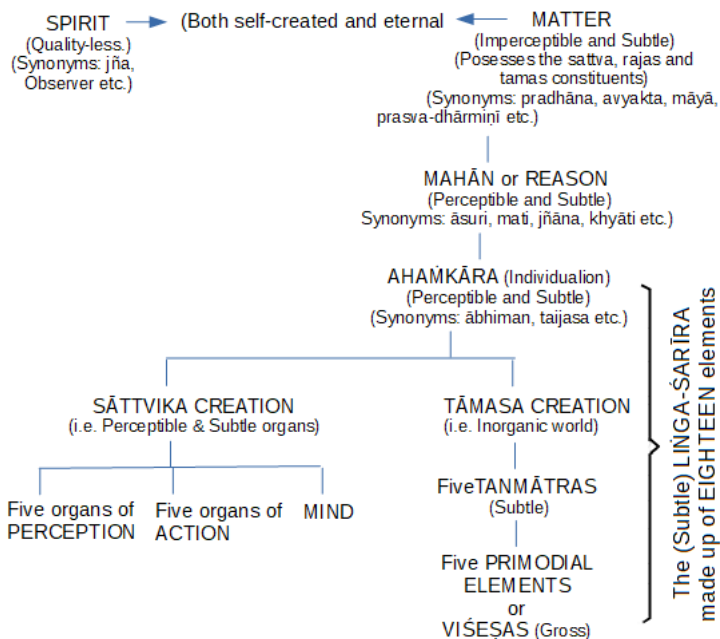
twelve, or thirteen in other places; but Śrī Śaṁkarācārya has proved on the authority of the Vedānta- Sūtras, that if an attempt is made to harmonise the various statements in the Upaniṣads, the number of these organs is fixed at eleven (Ve. Sū. Śāṁ. Bhā. 2.4.5, 6); and in the Gītā, it has been clearly stated that "indriyāṇi daśaikam ca" (Gī. 13.5), i.e., "the organs are ten plus one, or eleven". In short, there is no difference of opinion on this point between the Sāṁkhya and the Vedānta philosophy.

According to the Sāṁkhya philosophy, after the eleven organic faculties or qualities, which are the basis of the organic world, and the five subtle elementary essences (tanmātras) which are the basis of the inorganic world have thus come into existence as a result of sāttvika and tāmasa Individuation respectively, the five gross primordial elements (which are also called 'viśeṣa'), as also gross inorganic substances, come into existence out of the five fundamental subtle essences (tanmātras); and when these inorganic substances, come into contact with the eleven subtle organs, the organic universe comes into existence.

The order in which the various Elements come out of fundamental Matter according to Sāṁkhya philosophy, and

which has been so far described, will be clear from the genealogical tree given below:—

### THE GENEALGICAL TREE OF THE COSMOS



There are thus twenty-five elementary principles, counting the five gross primordial elements and Spirit. Out of these, the twenty-three elements including and after Mahān (Reason), are the evolutes (vikāras) of fundamental Matter. But even then, the subtle Tanmātras and the five gross primordial elements are substantial (dravyātmaka) evolutes and Reason. Individuation, and the organs are merely faculties or qualities. The further distinction is that whereas these

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twenty-three elements are perceptible, fundamental Matter is imperceptible. Out of these twenty-three elements, Cardinal Directions (east, west etc.,) and Time are included by Sāṃkhya philosophers in Ether (ākāśa), and instead of looking upon Vital Force (prāṇa) as independent, they give the name of Vital Force to the various activities of the organs, when these activities have once started (Sāṃ. Kā. 29). But this opinion is not accepted by Vedāntists, who consider Vital Force as an independent element (Ve. Sū. 2.49). Similarly, as has been stated before, Vedāntists do not look upon either Matter or Spirit as self-created and independent, but consider them to be two modifications (vibhūti) of one and the same Paramēśvara. Except for this difference between the Sāṃkhyas and the Vedāntists, the other ideas about the order of creation of the Cosmos are common to both. For instance, the following description of the Brahmavṛkṣa or Brahmavana,

which has occurred twice in the Anugītā in the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 35.20 – 23 and 47.12 – 15) is in accordance with the principles of Sāṃkhya philosophy:—

avyaktabījaprabhavo buddhiskabandhamayo mahān ।  
mahāhamkāravitapaḥ indriyāntarakotaraḥ ॥  
mahābhutaviśākhāś ca viśeṣapraśākhavān ।  
sadāparṇaḥ sadāpuṣpaḥ śubhāśubhaphalodayaḥ ॥  
ājīvyāḥ sarva bhūtānām brahmavṛkṣaḥ sanātanaḥ ।  
enam chittvā ca bhittvā ca tattvajñānāsinā budhaḥ ॥  
hitvā saṅgamayān pāśān mṛtyujamnarodayān ।  
nirmamo nirahamkāro mucyate nātra saṁśayaḥ ॥

that is: "the Imperceptible (Matter) is its seed, Reason (mahān) is its trunk, Individuation (ahamkāra) is its principal foliage, the Mind and the ten organs are the hollows inside the trunk, the (subtle) primordial elements (the five tanmātras) are its

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five large branches, and the Viśeṣas or the five Gross primordial elements are its sub-branches, and it is always covered by leaves, flowers, and auspicious or inauspicious fruit, and is the fundamental support of all living things; such is the ancient gigantic Brahmavṛkṣa. By cutting it with the

philosophical sword and chopping it up into bits, a scientist should destroy the bonds of Attachment (saṅga) which cause life, old age, and death, and should abandon the feeling of mine-ness and individuality; in this way alone can he be released". In short, this Brahmavṛkṣa is nothing but the 'dance of creation' or the 'diffusion' of Matter or of Illusion. The practice of referring to it as a 'tree' is very ancient and dates from the time of the Ṛg-veda, and it has been called by the name 'the ancient Pipal Tree' (sanātana aśvatthavṛkṣa) in the Upaniṣads (Kaṭha. 6.1). But there, that is, in the Vedas, the root of this tree (Parabrahman) is stated to be above and the branches (the development of the visible world) to be below. That the description of the Pipal tree in the Gītā has been made by harmonising the principles of Sāṃkhya philosophy with the Vedic description has been made clear in my commentary on the 1st and 2nd stanzas of the 15th chapter of the Gītā.

As the Sāṃkhyas and the Vedāntists classify in different ways the twenty-five elements described above in the form of a tree, it is necessary to give here some explanation about this classification. According to the Sāṃkhyas, these twenty-five elements fall into the four divisions of (i) fundamental prakṛti, (ii) prakṛti-vikṛti, (iii) vikṛti and (iv) neither prakṛti nor vikṛti. (1) As Prakṛti is not created from anything else, it is called fundamental prakṛti (Matter). (2) When you leave this fundamental Matter and come to the second stage, you come

to the element Mahān. As Mahān springs from Prakṛti, it is said to be a vikṛti or an evolute of fundamental Matter; and as later on, Individuation comes out of the Mahān element, this Mahān is the prakṛti or root of Individuation. In this way this Mahān (Reason) becomes the prakṛti or root of Individuation on the one hand, and the vikṛti (evolute) of the fundamental Prakṛti (Matter) on the other hand. Therefore, Sāṃkhya philosophers have classified

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it under the heading of 'prakṛti-vikṛti'; and in the same way Individuation (ahamkāra), and the five Tanmātras are also classified under the heading of 'prakṛti-vikṛti'. That element which, being itself horn out of some other element, i.e., being a vikṛti, is at the same time the parent (prakṛti) of the subsequent element is called a 'prakṛti-vikṛti'. Mahat (Reason) Individuation, and the five Tanmātras, in all seven, are of this kind. (3) But the five organs of Perception, the five organs of Action, the Mind, and the five Gross primordial elements, which are in all sixteen, give birth to no further elements. On the other hand, they themselves are born out of some element or other. Therefore, these sixteen elements are not called 'prakṛti-vikṛti', but are called 'vikṛti' (evolutes). (4) The Spirit (Puruṣa) is neither prakṛti nor vikṛti; it is an independent and apathetic observer. This classification has been made by Īśvarakṛṣṇa, who has explained it as follows:—

mūlaprakṛtir avikṛtiḥ mahadādyāḥ prakṛtīvikṛtayaḥ sapta  
|

śoḍaṣakastu vikāro na prakṛtir na vikṛtiḥ puruṣaḥ ||

that is: "The fundamental Prakṛti is 'a-vikṛti', that is, it is the vikāra (evolute) of no other substance; Mahat and the others, in all seven – Mahat, Ahaṁkāra and the five Tanmātras are prakṛti-vikṛti and the eleven organs, including the Mind, and the five gross primordial elements, making in all sixteen, are called merely vikṛti or vikāra (evolutes). The Puruṣa (Spirit) is neither a prakṛti nor a vikṛti" (Sāṁ. Kā. 3). And these twenty-five elements are again classified into the three classes of Imperceptible, Perceptible and Jñā. Out of these, fundamental Matter is imperceptible, the twenty-three elements, which have sprung from Matter are perceptible, and the Spirit is 'Jñā'. Such is the classification according to Sāṁkhya philosophy, In the Purāṇas, the Smṛtis, the Mahābhārata and other treatises relating to Vedic philosophy, these same twenty-five elements are generally mentioned (See Maitryu. 6. 10: Manu 1, 14, 15). But in the Upaniṣads, it is stated that all these are created out of the Parabrahman, and there is no further discussion or classification. One comes across such

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classification in treatises later than the Upaniṣads, but it is different from the Sāṁkhya classification mentioned above.



The total number of elements is twenty-five. As sixteen elements out of these are admittedly Vikṛtis, that is, as they are looked upon as created from other elements, even according to Sāṃkhya philosophy, they are not classified in these treatises as prakṛti or fundamental substances. That leaves nine elements:— (1) Spirit, (2) Matter, (3 – 9) Mahat, Ahaṃkāra and the five subtle elements (Tanmātras). The Sāṃkhyas call the last seven, after Spirit and Matter, 'prakṛti-vikṛti'. But according to Vedānta philosophy, Matter is not looked upon as independent. According to their doctrine, both Spirit and Matter come out of one Parameśvara (Absolute Īśvara). If this proposition is accepted, the distinction made by Sāṃkhya philosophers between fundamental Prakṛti and prakṛti-vikṛti comes to an end; because, as Prakṛti itself is looked upon as having sprung from the Parameśvara, it cannot be called the Root, and it falls into the category of 'prakṛti-vikṛti'. Therefore, in describing the creation of the Cosmos, Vedānta philosophers say that from the Parameśvara there spring on the one hand the Jīva (Soul), and on the other hand, eight-fold Prakṛti (i.e., Prakṛti and seven prakṛti-vikṛtis, such as Mahat etc.), (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 306.29, and 310.10). That is to say, according to Vedānta philosophers, keeping aside sixteen elements out of twenty-five, the remaining nine fall into the two classes of 'Jīva' (Soul) and the 'eight-fold Prakṛti'. This classification of Vedānta philosophers has been accepted in the Bhagavadgītā; but therein also, a small distinction is ultimately made. What the Sāṃkhyas called 'Puruṣa' is called

'Jīva' by the Gītā, and the Jīva is described as being the 'parā-prakṛti' or the most sublime form of the Īśvara, and that which the Sāṃkhyas call the 'fundamental Prakṛti' is referred to in the Gītā as the 'apara' or inferior form of the Parameśvara (Gī. 7.4, 5). When in this way, two main divisions have been made, then, in giving the further sub-divisions or kinds of the second main division, namely, of the inferior form of the Īśvara, it becomes necessary to mention the other elements which have sprung from this inferior form, in addition to that inferior form. Because, the inferior form (that is, the fundamental

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Prakṛti of Sāṃkhya philosophy) cannot be a kind or sub-division of itself. For instance, when you have to say how many children a father has, you cannot include the father in the counting of the children. Therefore, in enumerating the sub-divisions of the inferior form of the Parameśvara, one has to exclude the fundamental Prakṛti from the eight-fold Prakṛti mentioned by the Vedāntists, and to say that the remaining seven, that is to say, Mahān, Ahamkāra, and the five Fine Elements are the only kinds or sub-divisions of the fundamental Prakṛti; but if one does this, one will have to say that the inferior form of the Parameśvara, that is, fundamental Prakṛti is of seven kinds, whereas, as mentioned above, Prakṛti is of eight kinds according to the Vedāntists. Thus, the Vedāntists will say that Prakṛti is of eight kinds, and the Gītā

will say that Prakṛti is of seven kinds, and an apparent conflict will come into existence between the two doctrines. The author of the Gītā, however, considered it advisable not to create such a conflict, but to be consistent with the description of Prakṛti as 'eight-fold'. Therefore, the Gītā has added the eighth element, namely, Mind, to the seven, namely Mahān, Ahaṁkāra, and the five Fine Elements, and has stated that the inferior form of the Parameśvara is of eight kinds (Gī. 7.5). But, the ten organs are included in the Mind, and the five primordial elements are included in the five Fine Elements. Therefore, although the classification of the Gītā, may seem different from both the Sāṁkhya and the Vedantic classification, the total number of the elements is not, on that account, either increased or decreased. The elements are everywhere twenty-five. Yet, in order that confusion should not arise as a result of this difference in classification, I have shown below these three methods of classification in the form of a tabular statement. In the thirteenth chapter of the Gītā (13.5), the twenty-five elements of the Sāṁkhyas are enumerated one by one, just as they are, without troubling to classify them; and that shows that though the classification may be different, the total number of the elements is everywhere the same:—

## CLASSIFICATION OF THE TWENTY-FIVE FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS

Sāṃkhya classification.	Elements.	Vedānta classification.	Gītā classification.
(1) Neither Prakṛti nor vikṛti.	1 SPIRIT.	(1) The Superior form of Para-brahman.	(1) parā Prakṛti.
(1) Fundamental Prakṛti.	1 PRAKṚTI.	(8) The inferior form of Para-brahman (eight-fold).	(1) aparā Prakṛti.
(7) Prakṛti-vikṛti.	1 Mahān. 1 Ahaṁkāra. 5 Tanmātras.		(8) There are eight subdivisions of the qparā Prakṛti.
(16) Vikāras.	1 MIND. 5 Organs of Perception. 5 Organs of Action. 5 Primordial Elements.	(16) These sixteen Elements are not looked upon as Fundamental Elements by Vedāntists as they are (evolutes).	(15) These fifteen Elements are not looked upon as Fundamental Elements by the Gītā, as they are (evolutes).

I have thus concluded the description of how the homogeneous, inorganic, imperceptible, and gross Matter, which was fundamentally equable, acquires organic heterogeneity as a result of Individuation after it has become inspired by the non-self-perceptible 'Desire' (buddhi) of creating the visible universe, and also how, later on, as a result of the principle of the Development of Constituents (guṇapariṇāma), namely

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that, "Qualities spring out of qualities" (guṇā guṇeṣu jāyante), the eleven sāttvika subtle elements, which are the fundamental elements of the organic world come into existence on the one hand, and the five subtle Fine Elements (tanmātras), which are the fundamental elements of the tāmasa world come into existence on the other hand. I must now explain in what order the subsequent creation, namely, the five gross primordial elements, or the other gross material substances which spring from them, have come into existence. Sāṃkhya philosophy only tells us that the five gross primordial elements or Viśeṣas have come out of the five Fine Elements, as a result of guṇa-pariṇāma. But, as this matter has been

more fully dealt with in Vedānta philosophy, I shall also, as the occasion has arisen, deal with that subject-matter, but after warning my readers that this is part of Vedānta philosophy and not of Sāṃkhya philosophy. Gross earth, water, brilliance, air and the ether are called the five primordial elements or Viśeṣas. Their order of creation has been thus described in the Taittirīyopaniṣad:— "ātmanaḥ ākāśaḥ sambhūtaḥ | ākāśād vāyuḥ | vāyor agniḥ | agner āpaḥ | adabhyaḥ pṛthivī | pṛthivyā oṣadhayaḥ | " etc. (Tai. U. 2.1). From the Paramātmān, (not from the fundamental Gross Matter as the Sāṃkhyas say), ether was first created; from ether, the air; from the air, the fire; from the fire, water; and from water, later on, the earth has come into being. The Taittirīyopaniṣad does not give the reason for this order. But in the later Vedānta treatises, the explanation of this order of creation of the five primordial elements seems to be based on the guṇapariṇāma principle of the Sāṃkhya system. These later Vedānta writers say that by the law of "guṇa guṇeṣu varānte" (qualities spring out of qualities), a substance having only one quality first comes into existence, and from that substance other substances having two qualities, three qualities etc., subsequently come into existence. As ether out of the five primordial elements has principally the quality of sound only, it came into existence first. Then came into existence the air, because, the air has two qualities, namely, of sound and touch. Not only do we hear the sound of air, but we feel it by means

of our organ of touch. Fire comes after the air, because, besides the qualities of sound and touch, it

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has also the third quality of colour. As water has, in addition to these three qualities, the quality of taste also, water must have come into existence after fire; and as the earth possesses the additional quality of smell besides these four qualities,, we arrive at the proposition that the earth must have sprung' later on out of water. Yāska has propounded this very doctrine (Nirukta 14.4). The Taittirīyopaniṣad contains the further description that when the five gross primordial elements had come into existence in this order, "pṛthivyā oṣadhayaḥ | oṣadhibhyo 'nnam | annāt puruṣaḥ |" (Tai. 2.1), i.e., "from the earth have grown vegetables; from the vegetables, food; and from food, man. This subsequent creation is the result of the mixture of the five primordial elements, and the process of that mixture is called 'pañcī-karaṇa' in the Vedānta treatises. Pañcī-karaṇa means the coming into existence of a new substance by the mixture of different qualities of each of the five primordial elements. This union of five (pañcī-karaṇa) can necessarily take place in an indefinite number of ways.

In the ninth daśaka (collection of ten verses each) of the-  
Dāsabodha, it is stated:-

By mixing black and white |  
we get the grey colour |  
By mixing black and yellow |  
we get the green colour || (9. 6. 40)

And in the 13th daśaka, it is stated as follows:-

In the womb of that earth |  
there is a collection of an infinite number of seeds ||  
When water gets mixed with the earth |  
sprouts come out ||  
Creepers of variegated colours |  
with waving leaves and flowers are next born ||  
After that come into existence |  
fruits of various tastes ||

... ..

The earth and water are the root |  
of all oviparous, viviparous, steam-engendered, and  
vegetable life ||



Such is the wonder |  
of the creation of the universe ||  
There are four classes and four modes of voice |  
eighty-four lakhs [1] of species of living beings ||

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- [1] This idea of 84 lakhs of births is from the Purāṇas, and it is quite dear that it is only approximate. Nevertheless, it is not totally without foundation. Western natural scientists believe, according to the Theory of Evolution, that the human being has come into existence by evolution from one subtle micro-organism in the form of a living nodule at the beginning of the universe. From this idea, it becomes quite clear how many generations of each subsequent species (yoni) must have come into existence and passed away in Older that this subtle nodule should have become a gross nodule, and that this gross nodule should in its turn have been transformed into a living bacillus and this bacillus been evolved into the next subsequent living organism. From this an English biologist has worked out a calculation, that for the smallest fish in water to develop its qualities and ultimately assume the form of a human being, there must have been at least 53 lakhs and 75 thousand generations of intermediate species and that the number of these generations may as well be ten times as much. These are the species ranging from the small aquatic animals upto the human being If, to this are added the number of minute aquatic organisms lower down in the scale of life, it is impossible to ascertain how many more lakhs of generations will have to be counted. From this it will be clear to what extent the idea of these generations in the purana of Materialistic scientists has exceeded the idea of 84 lakhs of species in our Purāṇas. The same law applies to the calculation of time. Geo-biologists say that it is impossible to form even a rough idea of the date when living micro-organisms first came into existence on the earth, and that aquatic

Have come into existence in the three worlds |  
which is the Cosmic Body " || (Dāsabodha 13.3.10 –  
15).

This description in the Dāsabodha given by Samartha Rāmadāsa is based on this idea. But it must not be forgotten that by the union of five (pañcīkaraṇa) only gross objects or gross bodies come into existence, and this gross body must become united first with subtle organs and next with the Ātman or the Spirit before it becomes a living body.

I must also make it clear here that this union of five, which has been described in the later Vedānta works, is not to be found in the ancient Upaniṣads. In the Chāndogyoṣad, these Tanmātras or primordial elements are not considered to be five; but brilliance, water and food (earth) are the only three which are considered as subtle fundamental elements, and the entire diverse universe is said to have come into existence by the

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micro-organisms must have come into existence crores of years ago. If further concise information is required about this matter, the reader is referred to The Last Link by Ernst Haeckel, with notes etc. by Dr. H. Gadow (1898). The above particulars have been taken from the appendices. The 84 lakhs of generations mentioned in the Purāṇas are to be counted as follows:— 9 lakhs for aquatic animals, 10 lakhs for birds, 11 lakhs for germs, 20 lakhs for beasts, 30 lakhs for immoveable things and 4 lakhs for mankind (See Dāsabodha 20.6).

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mixture of these three, that is, by 'trivṛtkaraṇa'; and it is stated in the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad that: "ajām ekaṁ lohitaśuklakṛṣṇāṁ bahvīḥ prajāḥ sṛjamānāṁ sarūpāḥ" (Śve. 4.5), i.e., "this she-goat (ajā) is red, or of the nature of fire; and white, or of the nature of water; and black, or of the nature of earth; and is thus made of three elements of three colours, and from it all creation (prajā) embodied in Name and Form has been created". In the 6th chapter of the Chāndogyaopaniṣad has been given the conversation between Śvetaketu and his father. In it, the father of Śvetaketu clearly tells him: "O, my son I in the commencement of the world, there was nothing except 'ekam evādvitīyaṁ sat' (single and unseconded sat), that is to say, nothing else except one homogeneous and eternal Parabrahman. How can 'sat' (something which exists) come into existence out of 'asat' (something which does not exist)? Therefore, in the beginning sat pervaded everything. Then that sat conceived the desire of becoming multifarious, that is, heterogeneous, and from it grew one by one, brilliance (tejas) water (āpa) and food (pṛthivī) in their subtle forms. Then, after the Parabrahman had entered these three elements in the form

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of Life, all the various things in the universe which are identified by Name and Form came into existence as a result of the union of those three (trivṛtkaraṇa). The red (lohita) colour, which is to be found in the gross fire or the Sun or in electricity, is the result of the subtle fundamental element of brilliance; the white (śukla) colour, of the fundamental subtle element of water; and the black (kṛṣṇa) colour, of the fundamental subtle element of earth. In the same way, subtle fire, subtle water, and subtle food (pṛthivī) are the three fundamental elements which are contained even in the food which man eats. Just as butter comes to the surface when you churn curds, so when this food, made up of the three subtle elements enters the stomach, the element of brilliance in it, creates gross, medium and subtle products in the shape of bones, marrow and speech respectively; and similarly, the element of water (āpa) creates: urine, blood and Vital Force; and the element of earth (pṛthivī) creates the three substances, excrement, flesh and mind" (Chān. 6.2 – 6). This system of the Chāndogyopaniṣad of not taking the primordial elements as five, but as only three, and of explaining the creation of all visible things by the union of these three substances (trivṛtkaraṇa) has been mentioned in the Vedānta-Sūtras (2.4.20), and Bādarāyaṇācārya does not even mention the word 'Pañcikaraṇa'. Nevertheless, in the Taittirīya (2.1), Praśna (4.8), Bṛhadāraṇyaka (4.4.5) and other Upaniṣads, and in the Śvetāśvatara itself (2.12) and in the Vedānta-Sūtras (2. 3. 1 – 14) and lastly in the Gītā (7.4; 13.5), five primordial

elements are mentioned instead of three; and in the Garbhopaniṣad, the human body is in the very beginning stated to be 'pañcātmaka', that is, made up of five; and the Mahābhārata and the Purāṇas give clear descriptions of Pañcīkaraṇa (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 184 – 186). From this it becomes quite clear, that the idea of the 'union of five' (pañcīkaraṇa) becomes ultimately acceptable to all Vedānta philosophers and that although the 'union of three' (trivṛtkaraṇa) may have been ancient, yet, after the primordial elements came to be believed to be five instead of three, the idea of Pañcīkaraṇa was based on the same sample as the Trivṛtkaraṇa, and the theory of Trivṛtkaraṇa went out of vogue. Not only is the human body formed of the five primordial elements, but the meaning of the

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word Pañcīkaraṇa has been extended to imply that each one of these five is divided in five different ways in the body. For instance, the quinary of skin, flesh, bone, marrow, and muscles grows out of earth etc. etc. (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 186.20 – 25; and Dāsabodha 17.8). This idea also seems to have been inspired by the description of Trivṛtkaraṇa in the Chāndogyaopaniṣad mentioned above. There also, there is a statement at the end that brilliance, water, and earth are each to be found in three different forms in the human body.

The explanation of how the numerous inactive (acetana), that is to say, lifeless or gross objects in the world, which can be distinguished by Name and Form, came into existence out of the fundamental imperceptible Matter – or according to the Vedānta theory, from the Parabrahman – is now over. I shall now consider what more the Sāṃkhya philosophy tells us about the creation of the sacetana (that is, active) beings in the world, and later on, see how far that can be harmonised with the Vedānta doctrines. The body of living beings comes into existence when the five gross primordial elements sprung from the fundamental Matter are united with the subtle organs. But though this body is organic, it is still gross. The element which activates these organs is distinct from Gross Matter and it is known as Spirit (puruṣa). I have, in the previous chapter, mentioned the various doctrines of the Sāṃkhya philosophy that this Spirit is fundamentally inactive, that the living world begins to come into existence when this Spirit is united with fundamental Matter, and that when the Spirit acquires the knowledge that "I am different from Matter", its union with Matter is dissolved, failing which it has to peregrinate in the cycle of birth and death. But as I have not, in that chapter, explained how the Ātman – or according to Sāṃkhya terminology, the Puruṣa – of the person, who dies without having realised that the Ātman is different from Matter, gets one birth after another, it is necessary now to consider that question more in detail. It is quite clear that the

Ātman of the man who dies without having acquired Self-Realisation does not escape entirely from the meshes of Matter; because, if such were the case, one will have to say with Cārvāka, that every

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man escapes from the tentacles of Matter or attains Release immediately after death; and Self-Realisation or the difference between sin and virtue will lose its importance. Likewise, if you say that after death, the Ātman or the Spirit alone survives, and that it, of its own accord, performs the action of taking new births, then the fundamental theorem that Spirit is inactive and apathetic, and that all the activity is of Matter is contradicted. Besides, by acknowledging that the Ātman takes new births of its own accord, you admit that to be its property and fall into the impossible position that it will never escape from the cycle of birth and death. It, therefore, follows that though a man may have died without having acquired Self-Realisation, his Ātman must remain united with Matter, in order that Matter should give it new births. Nevertheless, as the Gross Body is destroyed after death, it is quite clear that this union cannot continue to be with Matter composed of the five gross primordial elements. But it is not that Matter consists only of the five gross primordial elements. There are in all twenty-three elements which arise out of Matter, and the five gross primordial elements are the last five out of them.

When these last five elements (the five primordial elements) are subtracted from the twenty-three, eighteen elements remain. It, therefore, follows as a natural conclusion that though a man, who dies without having acquired Self-Realisation escapes from the Gross Body made up of the five gross primordial elements, that is to say, from the last five elements, yet, his death does not absolve him from his union with the remaining eighteen elements arising out of Matter. Reason (Mahān) Individuation, Mind, the ten organs, and the five Fine Elements are these eighteen elements. (See the Genealogical tree of the Cosmos given at page 243). All these elements are subtle. Therefore, that Body which is formed as a result of the continued union of Spirit (puruṣa) with them is called the 'Subtle Body', or the 'Liṅga-śarīra' as the opposite of the Gross Body or 'Sthūla-śarīra' (Sām. Kā. 40). If any person dies without having acquired Self-Realisation, this his Subtle Body, made up of the eighteen elements of Matter, leaves his Gross Body on his death along with the Ātman, and compels him to take birth after birth. To this, an objection is raised by some persons to

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the following effect: when a man dies, one can actually see that the activities of Reason, Individuation, Mind, and the ten organs come to an end in his Gross Body along with life; therefore, these thirteen elements may rightly be included in



the Subtle Body; but there is no reason for including the five Fine Elements in the Subtle Body along with these thirteen elements. To this the reply of the Sāṃkhya philosophers is, that the thirteen elements, pure Reason, pure Individuation, the Mind and the ten organs are only qualities of Matter, and in the same way as a shadow requires the support of some substance or other, or as a picture requires the support of the wall or of paper, so also must these thirteen elements, which are only qualities, have the support of some substance in order that they should stick together. Out of these, the Ātman (puruṣa), being itself qualityless and inactive, cannot by itself become the support for any quality. When the man is alive, the five gross primordial elements in his body form the support for these thirteen elements. But after his death, that is, after the destruction of the Gross Body, this support in the shape of the five primordial elements ceases to exist. Therefore, these thirteen elements, which are qualities, have to look for some other substance as a support. If you say that they can get the support of fundamental Matter, then, that is imperceptible and in an unevolved condition, that is to say, eternal and all-pervasive; and therefore, it cannot become the support of qualities like Reason etc., which go to form one small Subtle Body. Therefore, the five Fine Elements, which are the bases of the five gross primordial elements, have to be included in the Subtle Body side by side with the thirteen qualities, as a support for them in the place of the five gross primordial elements which are the evolutes of fundamental

Matter (Sāṃ. Kā. 41). Some writers belonging to the Sāṃkhya school imagine the existence of a third body, composed of the five Fine Elements, intermediate between the Subtle Body and the Gross Body, and maintain that this third body is the support for the Subtle Body. But that is not the correct interpretation of the forty-first couplet of the Sāṃkhya Kārikā, and in my opinion these commentators have imagined such a third, body merely by confusion of thought. In my opinion this couplet has no use beyond

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explaining why the five Fine Elements have to be included in the Subtle Body along with the thirteen other elements, namely, Reason etc. [1].

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- [1] It can be seen from a verse in the book of Bhatta Kumārila known as Mīmāṃsā-śloka-vārtika (Ātma-vāda, stanza 62), that he interprets this couplet in the same way as myself. That verse is as follows:-

antarābhavadeho hi neṣyate vindhyavāsinā ।

tadastitve pramāṇam hi na kimcid avagamyate ॥ 62 ॥

that is, "Vindhyavāsin did not accept the existence of an antarābhava, that is to say, of a 'deha' or Body which is intermediate between the Subtle Body and the Gross Body. There is no authority for saying that there is such an intermediate body". Īśvara-kṛṣṇa, used to live in the Vindhya mountains; that is why he was known as 'Vindhyavāsin'. The antarābhava (intermediate) Body is also known as 'gandharva'. (See Amarakośa 3. 3. 182, and the commentary on it by Kṣīrasvāmī,

Anybody can see after a little thought, that there is not much of a difference between the Subtle Body made up of eighteen elements described in the Sāṃkhya philosophy and the Subtle Body described in the Upaniṣads. It is stated in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad that: "just as a leech (jalāyukā) having reached the end of a blade of grass, places the anterior part of its body on the next blade (by its anterior feet), and then draws up the posterior part, which was placed on the former blade of grass, in the same way, the Ātman leaves one body and enters the other body " (Br. 4.4.3). But from this single illustration, the two inferences that (i) only the Ātman enters another body and that (ii) it does so immediately after leaving the first body, do not follow. Because, in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad itself, there is another statement further on (Br. 4.4.5), that the five subtle elements, the Mind, the organs, Vital Force and a man's righteous or unrighteous record, all leave the body along with the Ātman, which goes according to its mundane Actions to different spheres, where it remains for some time. (Br. 6.2.14 and 15). In the same way, it becomes quite clear from the description of the course

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followed by Jīva along with the fundamental element of water (āpa) in the Chāndogyopaniṣad (Chan. 5. 3. 3; 5. 9. 1) as also from the interpretation put thereon in the Vedānta-Sūtras (Ve. Sū. 3.1.1 – 7) that the Chāndogyopaniṣad included the three fundamental elements, viz., water (āpa) and along with it brilliance (tejas) and food (anna) in the Subtle Body. In short, it will be seen that when one adds Vital Force and 'dharmādharmā' (i.e., righteous and unrighteous actions) or Karma to the Sāṃkhya Subtle Body of eighteen elements, one gets the Vedantic Subtle Body. But in as much as Vital Force (prāṇa) is included in the inherent tendencies of the eleven organs, and righteous and unrighteous action (dharmādharmā) are included in the activities of Reason and Mind, one may say that this difference is merely verbal, and that there is no real difference of opinion about the components of the Subtle Body between the Vedānta and the Sāṃkhya philosophies. It is for this reason that the description of the Subtle Body According to the Sāṃkhyas as "mahadādi sūkṣmaparyantam" has been repeated, as it is, in the words

"mahadādyaviśeṣāntam", in the Maitryupaniṣad (Mai. 6.10).

[1] In the Bhagavadgītā, the Subtle Body is described as

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[1] In the copy of the Maitryupaniṣad included in the Anandashrama Edition of Dvātrīṃśadupaniṣad (thirty-two Upaniṣads), the reading of the hymn referred to above has been given as:

"mahadādyaviśeṣāntam", and the same has been accepted by the commentators. If this reading is accepted then the 'Mahat' element "which is at the beginning of the list has to be included in the Subtle Body and the 'Viśeṣas' or five primordial elements, indicated by the

consisting of "manaḥ ṣaṣṭhānīndriyāṇi" (Gī. 15.7), that is, of "the mind and the five organs of Perception"; and further on there is a description that life, in leaving the Gross Body, takes with itself this Subtle Body in the same way as the breeze carries scent from the flowers: "vāyur gandhān ivāśayāt" (Gī. 15.8). Nevertheless in as much as the metaphysical knowledge in the Gītā, has been borrowed from the Upaniṣads, one must say that the

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Blessed Lord has intended to include the five organs of Action, the five Fine Elements, Vital Force, and sin and virtue, in the words "the six organs including the mind". There is a statement also in the Manu-Smṛti that after a man dies, he

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words 'viśeṣāntam' have to be left out. That is to say, you have to interpret it as meaning that the 'mahat' out of "mahadādyam" has to be taken, and the 'viśeṣa' out of 'viśeṣāntam' has to be left out. But, where the beginning and the end are both mentioned, it is right to take both or to omit both. Therefore, according to Prof. Deussen, the nasal 'm' at the end of the word 'mahadādyam' should be omitted and the hymn should be read as "mahadādyā viśeṣāntam" (mahadādi + aviśeṣāntam). If that is done, the word 'aviśeṣa' comes into existence, and the same rule becoming applicable to the 'mahat' and to the 'aviśeṣa', that is, both to the beginning and the end, both get included in the Līṅga śāra. This is the peculiarity of this reading; but, it must be borne in mind, that whichever reading is accepted, there is no difference in the meaning.

acquires a Subtle Body made up of the five Fine Elements in order to suffer the consequences of his virtuous or evil actions (Manu. 12.16, 17). The words "vāyur gandhān ivāśayāt" in the Gītā, prove only that this body must be subtle; but they do not convey any idea as to the size of that body. But from the statement in the Sāvityupākhyāna in the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Vana. 296. 16), that Yama took out a Spirit as large as a thumb from the (gross) body of Satyavāna – "aṁguṣṭhamātraṁ puruṣaṁ niścakaraṣa yamo balāt" – it is clear that this Subtle Body was in those days, at least for purposes of illustration, taken to be as big as a thumb.

I have so far considered what inferences lead one to the conclusion that the Subtle Body exists, though it might be invisible to the eyes, as also what the component parts of that Subtle Body are. But it is not enough to merely say that the Subtle Body is formed by the combination of eighteen elements excluding fundamental Matter and the five gross primordial elements. There is no doubt that wherever this Subtle Body exists, this combination of eighteen elements will, according to its inherent qualities, create gross parts of the body, like hands and feet or gross organs, whether out of the gross bodies of parents, or later on, out of the food in the gross material world; and that it will maintain such a body. But, it remains to be explained why this Subtle Body, made up by the combination of eighteen elements, creates different bodies,

such as, animals, birds, men etc. The elements of consciousness in the living world are called 'Puruṣa' by the Sāṃkhya, and according to them, though these 'Puruṣas' are in- numerable, yet, in as much as each Puruṣa is inherently apathetic and inactive, the responsibility of creating different bodies, such as, birds, beasts etc. cannot rest with the Puruṣa. According to Vedānta philosophy, these differences are said to arise as a result of the sinful or virtuous Actions performed during life. This subject-matter of Karma-Vipāka (the effects caused by Actions) will be dealt with later on. According to Sāṃkhya philosophy, Karma cannot be looked upon as a third fundamental principle which is different from Spirit and Matter; and in as much as Spirit is apathetic, one has to say that Karma (Action) is something evolved from the sattva, rajas, and tamas constituents of Matter. Reason is the most important element out of the eighteen of which the Subtle Body is made up; because, it is from Reason that the subsequent seventeen elements, namely, Individuation, etc. come into existence. Therefore, that which goes under the name of 'Karma' in Vedānta philosophy is referred to in Sāṃkhya philosophy as the activity, property, or manifestation of Reason resulting from the varying intensity of the sattva, rajas and tamas constituents. This property or propensity of Reason is technically called 'Bhāva', and innumerable Bhāvas

come into existence as a result of the varying intensity of the sattva, rajas and tamas constituents. These Bhāvas adhere to the Subtle Body in the same way as scent adheres to a flower or colour to cloth (Sām. Kā. 40). The Subtle Body takes up new births according to these Bhāvas, or – in Vedāntic terminology – according to Karma; and the elements, which are drawn by the Subtle Body from the bodies of the parents in taking these various births, later on acquire various other Bhavas. The different categories of gods or men or animals or trees, are the results of the combination of these Bhavas (Sām. Kā. 43 – 55). When the sāttvika constituent becomes absolute and pre-eminent in these Bhāvas, man acquires Self-Realisation and apathy towards the world, and begins to see the difference between Matter and Spirit; and then the Spirit reaches its original state of Isolation

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(kaivalya), and the Subtle Body being discarded, the pain of man is absolutely eradicated. But, if this difference between Matter and Spirit has not been realised, and merely the sattva constituent has become predominant, the Subtle Body is re-born, among gods, that is, in heaven; if the rajas quality has become predominant, it is re-born among men, that is, on the earth; and if the tamas quality has become predominant, it is re-born in the lower (tiryak) sphere (Gī. 14.18). When in this way it has been re-born among men, the description of how a



kalala (state of the embryo a short time after conception), a budbuda (bubble), flesh, muscles, and other different gross organs grow out of a drop of semen has been given in Sāṃkhya philosophy on the basis of the theory of "guṇā guṇeṣu jāyante". (Sām. Kā. 43: Ma. Bhā. Śān. 320). That description is more or less similar to the description given in the Garbhopaniṣad. Although the above-mentioned technical meaning given to the word 'Bhāva' in Sāṃkhya philosophy may not be found in Vedānta treatises, yet, it will be seen from what has been stated above, that the reference by the Blessed Lord to the various qualities "buddhir jñānam asaṃmohaḥ kṣamā satyāṃ damaḥ śamaḥ" by the use of the word 'Bhāva' in the following verse (Gī. 10.4, 5; 7.12) must primarily have been made keeping in mind the technical terminology of Sāṃkhya philosophy.

When, in this way, all the living and non-living perceptible things in the universe have come into existence one after the other out of fundamental imperceptible Matter (according to the Sāṃkhya philosophy), or out of fundamental Parabrahman in the form of Sat (according to the Vedānta philosophy), all perceptible things are, both according to the Sāṃkhya and Vedānta philosophies, re-merged either into imperceptible Matter or into fundamental Brahman in a way which is the reverse of the order of development of constituents mentioned above, when the time for the destruction of the Cosmos comes (Ve. Sū. 2.3.14; Ma. Bhā. Śān. 232); that is to

say, earth, out of the five primordial elements, is merged into water, water into fire, fire into air, air into ether, ether into the Fine Elements, the Fine Elements into Individuation, Individuation into Reason, and Reason or Mahān into Matter and-according to the Vedānta philosophy – Matter becomes merged into the fundamental

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Brahman. What period of time lapses between the creation of the universe and its destruction or merging in nowhere mentioned in the Sāṃkhya Kārikā. Yet, I think that the computation of time mentioned in the Manu-Saṃhitā (1.66 – 73), Bhagavadgītā (8.17), or the Mahābhārata (Śān. 231) must have been accepted by the Sāṃkhya philosophers Our Uttarāyaṇa, that is, the period when the Sun seems, to travel towards the North is the day of the gods, and our Dakṣiṇāyaṇa, when the Sun seems to travel towards the South, is the night of the gods; because, there are statements not only in the Smṛtis, but also in astronomical treatises that the gods live on the Meru Mountain, that is to say, on the north pole, (Sūrya-Siddhānta, 1.13; 12.35.67). Therefore, the period made up of the Uttarāyaṇa and the Dakṣiṇāyaṇa, which is one year according to our calculations, is only one day and one night of the gods, and three hundred and sixty of our years are three hundred and sixty days and nights or one year of the gods. We have four yugas called, Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali. The

periods of the yugas are counted as four thousand years for the Kṛta, three thousand years for the Tretā, two thousand years for the Dvāpara and one thousand years for the Kali. But one yuga does not start immediately after the close of the previous one, and there are intermediate years which are conjunctual. On either side of the Kṛta yuga, there are four hundred years; on either side of the Tretā, three hundred; on either side of the Dvāpara, two hundred; and on either side of Kali there are one hundred. In all, these transitional periods of the four yugas amount to two thousand years. Adding these two thousand years to the ten thousand years over which the Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara and Kali yugas extend, we get twelve thousand years. Now, are these twelve thousand years of human beings or of the gods? If these are considered to be human years, then, as more than five thousand years have elapsed since the commencement of the Kali yuga, not only is the Kali yuga of a thousand human years over, but the following Kṛta yuga is also over, and we must believe that we are now in the Tretā yuga. In order to get over this difficulty, it has been stated in the Purāṇas that these twelve thousand years are of the gods. Twelve thousand

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years of the gods mean  $360 \times 12000 = 43,20,000$ , that is, forty-three lakhs and twenty thousand years. The fixing of the yuga in our present almanacs is based on that method of

calculation. This period of twelve thousand years of the gods, is one mahāyuga of human beings, or one cycle of four yuga of the gods. Seventy-one such cycles of yugas of the gods make up one 'manvantara', and there are fourteen such manvantaras. But, at the commencement and the end of the first manvantara and subsequently at the end of each manvantara, there is a conjunctive period equal to one Kṛta yuga, that is to say, there are fifteen such conjunctive periods. These fifteen conjunctive periods and fourteen manvantaras make up one thousand yugas of the gods or one day of Brahmadeva (Sūrya-Siddhānta 1. 15 – 20); and one thousand more such yugas make up one night of Brahmadeva, as has been stated in the Manu-Smṛiti and in the Mahābhārata (Manu. 1.69 – 75 and 79; Ma. Bhā. Śān. 231. 18 – 31 and the Nirukta by Yāska 14.9). According to this calculation, one day of Brahmadeva amounts to four hundred and thirty-two crores of human years, that is to say, 4,320,000,000 years. And this is called a 'kalpa' [1], When, this day of Brahmadeva or kalpa starts:-

avyaktād vyaktayaḥ sarvāḥ prabhavanty aharāgame ।  
 rātryāgame praliyante tatraivāvyaktasamjñake ॥ (Gī. 8.  
 18).

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[1] A calculation of yugas etc., according to astrological science has been made by the late Shankar Balkrishna Dikshit in his work Bhāratiya Jyotiḥśāstra in various places to which the reader is referred. See pages 103 to 105 and p. 193 etc.

that is, "all the perceptible things in the universe begin to be created out of the Imperceptible; and when the night of Brahmadeva starts, the same perceptible things again begin to be merged in the Imperceptible", as has been stated in the Bhagavadgītā (Gī. 8.18 and 9.7), as also in the Smṛti treatises, and elsewhere in the Mahābhārata. There are besides this, other descriptions of Cosmic Destruction (pralaya) in the Purāṇas. But as in those pralayas the entire universe,

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Including the Sun and the Moon, are not destroyed, they are not taken into account in the consideration of the creation and the destruction of the Cosmos. One kalpa means one day or one night of Brahmadeva and 360 such days and 360 such nights make up one of his years, and taking the life of Brahmadeva at one hundred such years, one half of his life is now over and the first day of the second half of his life, that is, of his fifty-first year, or the Śvetavārāha kalpa has now started; and there are statements in the Purāṇas that out of the fourteen manvantaras of this kalpa, six manvantaras are over, as also 27 mahāyugas out of the seventy-one mahāyugas of the seventh manvantara called Vaivasvata, and that the first caraṇa, or quarter of the 28th mahāyuga of the Vaivasvata manvantara is now going on (See Viṣṇu-Purāṇa 1.3). In the Śaka year 1821, exactly five thousand years of this Kaliyuga were over; and according to this calculation, there were in the

Śaka year 1821, three lakhs and ninety-one thousand years still in hand for the pralaya in the Kaliyuga to take place; therefore, the consideration of the Mahāpralaya to take place at the end of the present kalpa is a far, far, distant thing. The day of Brahmadeva, made up of four hundred and thirty-two crores of human years, is now going on and not even the noon of that day, that is to say, seven manvantaras are yet over.

As the description which has been given above of the creation and the destruction of the Cosmos is consistent with Vedānta philosophy– and if you omit the Parabrahman, also consistent with Sāṃkhya philosophy – this tradition of the order of formation of the universe has been accepted as correct by our philosophers, and the same order has been mentioned in the Bhagavadgītā. As has been stated in the beginning of this chapter, we come across other ideas regarding the creation of the universe in some places in the Śrutis, the Smṛtis, and the Purāṇas, namely, that the Brahmadeva or Hiranyagarbha first came into existence, or that water first came into existence and a Golden Egg was born in that water from the seed of the Parameśvara etc. But all these ideas are looked upon as inferior or merely descriptive; and when there is any occasion to explain them, people say that Hiranyagarbha or Brahma-

deva is the same as Matter. Even the Blessed Lord has in the Bhagavadgītā called this Matter of three constituents by the name 'Brahma' in the words "mama yonir mahad brahma" (Gī. 14.3), and He has said that from this His seed, numerous beings are created out of Matter, as a result of three constituents. Vedānta treatises say that the description found in different places that Dakṣa and other seven mind-born sons, or the seven Manus, were born from. Brahmadeva, and that they thereafter created the moveable and immobile universe (Ma. Bhā. Ā. 65 – 67; Ma. Bhā. Śān. 207; Manu. 1.34 – 63), which is once referred to also in the Gītā (Gī. 10.6), can be made consistent with the above-mentioned scientific theory of the creation of the Cosmos, by interpreting Brahmadeva as meaning Matter; and the same argument is also applicable in other places. For instance, in the Śaiva or Pāśupata Darśana, Śiva is looked upon as the actual creator and five things, causes, products etc. are supposed to have come into existence from him; and in the Nārāyaṇīya or Bhāgavata religion, Vāsudeva is supposed to be the primary cause, and it is stated that Saṁkarṣaṇa (Jīva or Soul) was first born from Vasudeva, Pradyumna (Mind) from Saṁkarṣaṇa, and Aniruddha (Individuation) from Pradyumna. But as, according to the Vedānta philosophy, Jīva (Soul) is not something which comes into existence anew every time, but is a permanent or eternal part of a permanent or eternal Paramēśvara, the above-mentioned doctrine of the Bhāgavata religion regarding the birth of Jīva has been refuted in the second portion of the

second chapter of the Vedānta-Sūtras (Ve. Sū. 2.2.42 – 45); and it is stated there that this doctrine is contrary to the Vedas, and, therefore, objectionable; and this proposition of the Vedānta-Sūtras has been repeated in the Gītā (Gī. 13.4; 15.7). In the same way, Sāṃkhya philosophers believe that there are two independent principles, Prakṛti and Puruṣa. But Vedānta philosophy does not accept this dualism, and says that both Prakṛti and Puruṣa are manifestations of one eternal and qualityless Absolute Self (Paramātmān); and this doctrine has been accepted in the Bhagavadgītā (Gī. 9. 10). But, this matter will be more fully dealt with in the next chapter. I have to state here only this, that although the Bhagavadgītā

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accepts the principle of the devotion to Vāsudeva and the theory of Action (pravṛtti) propounded in the Nārāyaṇīya or Bhāgavata religion, it does not accept the further doctrine of that religion, that Saṃkarṣaṇa (Jīva) was first created out of Vasudeva, and Pradyumna (Mind) out of Saṃkarṣaṇa, and Aniruddha (Individuation) out of Pradyumna; and the words Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, or Aniruddha are nowhere come across in the Gītā. This is the important difference between the Bhāgavata religion mentioned in the Pañcarātra, and the Bhāgavata religion mentioned in the Gītā. I have expressly mentioned this fact here in order that one should not draw the mistaken conclusion that the creed of devotional schools like



the Bhāgavata school regarding the creation of the Cosmos or the Jīva-Parameśvara is acceptable to the Gītā, from the mere fact that the Bhāgavata religion has been mentioned in the Bhagavadgītā. Let us now consider whether or not there is some element or principle at the root of the perceptible and imperceptible or mutable and immutable universe, which is beyond the Prakṛti and Puruṣa mentioned in Sāṃkhya philosophy. This is what is known as Adhyātma (the philosophy of the Absolute Self) or Vedānta.

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# CHAPTER IX.

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE ABSOLUTE SELF. (ADHYATMA)

paras tasmāt tu bhāvo 'nyo 'vyakto 'vyaktāt sanātanah |  
yaḥ sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu naśyatsu na vinaśyati || [1]

~ Gītā (8.20).

The sum and substance of the last two chapters was that what was referred to as the kṣetrajña (Owner of the Body) in the consideration of the Body and the Ātman is known in Sāṃkhya philosophy as 'Puruṣa'; and that when one considers the question of the construction and the destruction of the mutable and immutable or the moveable and immovable world, one arrives finally, according to the Sāṃkhyas, at only two independent and eternal fundamental elements, namely, Matter and Spirit; and that it is necessary for the Spirit to realise its difference from Matter, that is, its isolation, and

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[1] "That second imperceptible substance, which is higher than the (Sāṃkhya) Imperceptible, and which is eternal, and which is not destroyed even when all other living things are destroyed", is the ultimate goal.

transcend the three qualities (become triguṇātīta) in order to obtain the total annihilation of its pain and attain Release, Modern natural scientists explain the order in which Matter places its evolution before Spirit, after its union with Spirit, in a way slightly different from the Sāṃkhya; and, as the natural sciences are further developed, this order is likely to be improved. But the fundamental proposition that all perceptible objects have come into existence in a gradual order out of one imperceptible Matter as a result of the development of the constituents, cannot possibly be altered. Nevertheless, looking upon this as the subject-matter of other sciences, the lion of Vedānta does not enter into any dispute about it. That lion wants to go beyond all these sciences, and determine what Absolute Element is at the root of the Cosmic Body, and how a man should be merged in It; and in this its province it will not be out-roared by any other science. As jackals become

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mute in the presence of the lion, so do all other sciences in the presence of Vedānta; therefore, an ancient classical writer has appropriately described Vedānta in the following words:-

tāvat garjanti śāstrāṇi jambukā vipine yathā ।

na garjati mahāśaktiḥ yāvad vedāntakesarī ॥

that is: "other sciences howl like jackals in the woods, so long as the lion of Vedānta, the all-powerful, does not roar". The 'Observer' which has been located after the consideration of the Body and the Ātman, namely, the Puruṣa (Spirit) or Ātman (Self), and imperceptible Matter with its sattva, rajas and tamas constituents which has been located after the-consideration of the Mutable and the Immutable, are both independent according to the Sāṃkhyas, who say that, on that, account, the fundamental Element of the world must be looked, upon as dual. But Vedānta goes further, and says that in as- much as the spirits of the Sāṃkhyas are innumerable (though, they are qualityless), it would be prima facie better and more proper from the logical point of view (i) to carry to its- logical conclusion and without exception, the theory of the- unifying tendency of Knowledge, described in the words, "avibhaktaṁ vibhakteṣu", which is seen rising from lower grades to higher grades, and as a result of which tendency . all the various perceptible objects in the universe can be included in one imperceptible Matter, and (ii) to include both Matter and these innumerable Spirits finally and without division in the Absolute Element, than to believe that fundamental Matter is capable of first ascertaining in what the good of each one of these innumerable Spirits lies, and of behaving accordingly (Gī. 18.20 – 22). Diversity is the result of Individuation, and if Spirit is qualityless, these innumerable Spirits cannot possess the quality of remaining distinct from each other; or, one has to say that they are not fundamentally

innumerable, but that this innumerability has arisen in them as a result of their contact with the quality of Individuation possessed by Matter. There arises also another question, namely, is the union which takes place between independent Spirit and independent Matter real or illusory?. If you say it is real (permanent), then, in as

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much as it can never be got rid of, the Ātman can never attain Release according to the Sāṃkhya doctrines; and if you say it is illusory, then, the statement that Matter begins to place its evolution before Spirit, as a result of its union with Spirit, falls to the ground. Even the illustration that Matter keeps up a continual dance for the benefit of Spirit, in the same way as the cow gives milk for the benefit of its calf, is inappropriate; because, you cannot explain away the relation between Matter and Spirit in the same way as you can explain the love of the cow for her calf on the ground that it has come out of her womb ("Ve. Sū. Śāṃ. Bhā. 2. 2. 3). According to Sāṃkhya philosophy, Matter and Spirit are fundamentally extremely different from each other and whereas one is gross (jaḍa), the other is self-conscious (śacetana). If these two substances are extremely different and independent of each other at the commencement of the world, why should one act for the benefit of the other? Saying that such is their inherent quality is not a satisfactory answer. If one has to rely on an inherent

quality, why find fault with the Gross-Non-Dualism (jaḍādvaita) of Haeckel?, Does not Haeckel say that in the course of the growth of the constituents of fundamental Matter, it acquires the Self-consciousness of looking at itself or of thinking of itself? But if the Sāṃkhya do not accept that position, and if they differentiate between the 'Observer' and the 'visible world', why should one not make further use of the logic by which one arrives at this differentiation? Howmuchsoever one may examine the visible world, and come to the conclusion that the sensory nerves of the eye possess particular properties, yet, the one who has ascertained this, remains a separate entity. When in this way the Spirit which sees the visible world is found to be different from the visible world which it sees, then, is there or is there not some way for us for ascertaining who this 'Observer' is, as also whether the real form of the visible universe is as we perceive it by our organs, or different from it? Sāṃkhya philosophers say that, as these questions can never be solved, one is driven to look upon Matter and Spirit as two fundamentally different and independent elements; and if we consider the matter purely from the point of view of natural sciences, this opinion of the Sāṃkhyas cannot be said to be

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incorrect; because, the 'Observer', or what is known in Vedānta as the 'Ātman', cannot at any time become

perceptible to the organs of the Observer, that is, to its own organs, as a separate entity, in the same way as we can examine the properties of the other objects in the universe as a result of their having become perceptible to our organs; and how can human organs examine such a substance which is incapable of perception by the organs, that is, beyond the reach of the organs (indriyātīta)? The Blessed Lord has himself described the Ātman in the Bhagavadgītā in the following words:—

nainam chindanti śastrāṇi nainam dahati pāvakaḥ ।  
na cainam kledayanty āpo na śoṣayati mārutaḥ ॥ (Gī.  
2.23).

that is, "it, that is, the Ātman cannot be cut by weapons, it cannot be burnt by fire, it cannot be wetted by water or dried up by wind". Therefore, the Ātman is not such a thing that it will be liquified like other objects by pouring on it a liquid substance like sulphuric acid, or that we will be able to see its interior by cutting it by sharp instruments in a dissecting room, or that by holding it over fire it will be turned to gas, or that it will be dried up by wind!" In short, all the devices which natural scientists have got for examining worldly objects fall flat in this case. Then, how is the Ātman to be examined? The question does appear to be difficult; but if one ponders a little over the matter, it will be seen to be not difficult. How have even the Sāṃkhya determined that Spirit is qualityless and independent? Have they not done that by experience got by

their own consciousness? Then, why not make use of the same method for determining the true nature of Matter and Spirit 1  
Herein lies the great difference between Materialistic philosophy and the philosophy of the Absolute Self. The subject-matter of Materialistic philosophy is perceptible to the organs, whereas that of the philosophy of the Absolute Self is beyond the organs, that is, it is self-perceptible, or something which one oneself alone can realise. It may be argued that if the Ātman is self-perceptible, then let each person acquire such knowledge of it as he himself can: where is the use of the

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philosophy of the Absolute Self? This objection will be proper, if the Mind or the Conscience of each man were equally pure. But, as we know by experience that the purity or strength of everybody's mind is not the same, we have to- accept as authoritative in this matter the experience of only those persons whose minds are extremely pure, clean, and broad. There is no sense in carrying on a foolish argument that 'I think like this' or 'you think like that' etc. Vedānta does not ask you to abandon logic altogether. All that it says is that since the subject-matter of the philosophy of the Absolute Self is self-perceptible, that is, as it is not capable of discernment by Materialistic methods, those arguments, which are inconsistent with the personal and direct experience which supermen, possessing an extremely pure, clean, and broad



mind, have described regarding the Absolute Self, cannot be taken as correct in the consideration of that philosophy. Just as in Materialistic sciences, inferences inconsistent with physical experience are considered useless, so in the philosophy of the Absolute Self, personal experience or something which one's Ātman has realised is considered of higher value than technical skill. That teaching which is consistent with such self-experience is acceptable to the Vedāntists. Śrīmat Śaṅkarācārya has laid down this very principle in his commentary on the Vedānta-Sūtras, and those who wish to study the philosophy of the Absolute Self must always bear it in mind. There is an ancient saying that:—

acintyāḥ khalu ye bhāvā na tāṁs tarkeṇa sādhayet ।

prakṛtibhyaḥ paraṁ yat tu tad acintyasya lakṣaṇam ॥

that is, "one should not, by mere imagination or inference, draw conclusions about those objects on which it is impossible to contemplate as they are beyond the reach of the organs; that substance which is beyond Matter, (which is the fundamental substance of the entire universe), is, in this way, incapable of contemplation"; and this stanza has been, adopted in the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Bhīṣma 5.12) and also in the commentary of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya on the Vedānta-Sūtras, but with the reading 'yojayet' instead of 'sādhayet'. (Ve. Sū. Śāṁ. Bhā. 2.1. 7). It is similarly stated in the Muṇḍakopaniṣad

and the Kaṭhōpaniṣad, that knowledge of the Absolute Self cannot be got merely by imagination (Muṇ. 3.2.3; Kaṭha. 2.8.9 and 22). That is why the Upaniṣads have an important place in the philosophy of the Absolute Self. Much attention had been paid in India in ancient times to the question of concentrating the mind, and there was developed in our country an independent science on that subject which is known as the (Pātañjala) Yoga science. Those venerable Ṛṣis who, being experts in that science, had besides minds which were naturally very pure and broad, have described in the Upaniṣads the experience gained by them by introspection about the nature of the Ātman, or all that with which their pure and peaceful minds were inspired. Therefore, for drawing any conclusion about any Metaphysical principle, one cannot but refer to these Śruti texts (Kaṭha. 4.1). One may find various arguments which support and justify this self-experience according to one's own acumen; but thereby, the authoritativeness of the original self-experience does not suffer. It is true that the Bhagavadgītā is a Smṛti text; but, I have explained in the very beginning of the first chapter, that it is considered to be as authoritative in the matter as the Upaniṣads. I have, therefore, in this chapter first explained with authorities, but simply – that is, without giving reasons – the doctrines propounded in the Gītā and in the Upaniṣads about this unimaginable Substance which is beyond Matter,

and I have considered later on in the chapter in what way those theories can be scientifically supported.

The Bhagavadgītā does not accept the Sāṃkhya dualism of Matter and Spirit, and the first doctrine of the philosophy of the Absolute Self in the Gītā, as also in Vedānta, is that there is at the root of the moveable and immoveable world, a third Principle which is all-pervading, imperceptible and imperishable, and which is beyond both Matter and Spirit. Although the Sāṃkhya Prakṛti is imperceptible, it is qualityful (saguṇa), because, it is composed of the three constituents. But whatever is qualityful is perishable. Therefore, that something else which, being imperceptible, still survives after this qualityful imperceptible Matter has been destroyed, is the real and permanent Principle of the entire Cosmos – as has been

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stated in the Gītā in the course of the discussion on Matter and Spirit in the stanza (Gī. 8.20) quoted at the beginning of this chapter; and later on, in the fifteenth chapter, after referring to the Mutable and the Immutable – the Perceptible and the Imperceptible – as the two Sāṃkhya elements, the Gītā says:–

uttamaḥ puruṣas tv anyāḥ paramātmety udāhṛtaḥ ।

yo lokatrayam āviśya bibharty avyaya īśvaraḥ || (15.17)

that is, "that Puruṣa, which is different from both these (Matter and Spirit) is the Super-Excellent, the One which is known as the Absolute Ātman, the Inexhaustible and the All-Powerful; and, pervading the three-sphered universe, It protects it." As this Spirit is 'beyond' both the Mutable and the Immutable, that is, beyond the Perceptible and the Imperceptible, it is properly called (See Gī. 15.18) 'the Absolute Spirit' (puruṣottama). Even in the Mahābhārata, Bhṛgu has said to Bhāradvāja as follows in defining the word 'Paramātman':

ātmā kṣetrajña ity uktaḥ saṁyuktaḥ prakṛtair guṇaiḥ |  
tair eva tu vinirmuktaḥ paramātmety udāhṛtaḥ || (Ma.  
Bhā. Śān. 187. 24).

that is, "when the Ātman is imprisoned within the body, it is called Kṣetrajña (or Jīvātman, i.e., personal Self); and when the same Ātman is released from these 'prākṛta' qualities, that is, from the qualities of Matter or of the body, it is known as the Paramātman (Absolute Self)". One is likely to think that these two definitions of the 'Paramātman' are different from each other; but really speaking, they are not so. As there is only one Paramātman, which is beyond the Mutable and Immutable Cosmos, and also beyond the Jīva (or, beyond both imperceptible Matter and Spirit, according to the Sāṁkhya philosophy) a two-fold characteristic or definition of one and the same Paramātman can be given, by once saying that It is beyond the Mutable and the Immutable, and again saying that

It is beyond Jīva (Soul) or the Jīvātman (i.e., Puruṣa). Bearing this aspect in mind, Kālidāsa has described the Parameśvara in the Kumārasambhava in the following words: "You are the Matter which exerts itself for the benefit of the Spirit, and You are also the Spirit which, apathetic Itself, observes that

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Matter" (Kuma. 2.13). So also, the Blessed Lord has said in -the Gītā: "mama yonir mahadbrahma" , i.e., "Matter is My generative principle (yonī) or only one of My forms" (14.3) and that "Jīva or Soul is a part of Me" (15.7); and in the seventh chapter, the Blessed Lord says:—

bhūmir āponalo vāyuh khaṁ mano buddhir eva ca |  
ahaṁkāra itīyaṁ me bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā || (Gī.  
7.4).

that is, "the earth, water, fire, air, ether, the Mind, Reason, and Individuation is My eightfold Prakṛti"; besides this (apareyaṁ itastv anyāṁ), "that Jīva (Soul) which is maintaining the whole of this world is also My second Prakṛti" (Gī. 7.5). The twenty-five Sāṁkhya elements have been referred to in many places in the Mahābhārata. Nevertheless, it is stated in each place that there is beyond these twenty-five elements an Absolute Element (paramatattva), which is the twenty-sixth (ṣaḍviṁśa) Element, and that a man does not become a

'buddha' (scient) unless he has realised It (Śān. 308). Our world is nothing but that knowledge which we get of all the objects in the world by means of our organs of Perception; that is why Matter or Creation is sometimes referred to as 'jñāna' (Knowledge), and from this point of view, the Spirit becomes 'the Knower' i.e., jñātā (Śān. 306. 35 – 41). But the real TO BE KNOWN (jñeya) is beyond both Matter and Spirit, that is, beyond both Knowledge and Knower, and, that is what is known as the Absolute Spirit (paramapuruṣa) in the Gītā (Gī. 13.12). Not only the Gītā, but also all the works on Vedānta philosophy are repeatedly exhorting us to realise that parama or para (that is, Absolute) Spirit which pervades the entire Cosmos and eternally maintains it; and they say that It is One, that It is Imperceptible, that It is Eternal, and that It is Immutable. The adjectives 'akṣara' (Immutable) and 'avyakta' (Imperceptible) are used in Sāṃkhya philosophy with reference to Prakṛti (Matter), because, it is one of the Sāṃkhya doctrines that there is no other fundamental cause of the Cosmos which is more subtle than Prakṛti (Sāṃ. Kā. 61). But – and my readers must bear this in mind- - as, from 'the point of view of Vedānta, the Parabrahman alone is a-kṣara, that is, something

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which is never destroyed, and also a-vyakta, that is, imperceptible to the organs, the same terms 'akṣara' and

'avyakta' are used in the Gītā for referring to the form of the Parabrahman which is beyond Matter (Gī. 8.20; 11.37; 15.16, 17). It is true that when this point of view has been accepted it would be incorrect to refer to Matter as akṣara (imperishable or immutable) though it may be avyakta (imperceptible); but as the Gītā accepts the doctrines of the Sāṃkhya system, regarding the order of creation of the Cosmos to such extent as they can be accepted without prejudicing the omnipotence of this Third Element (Absolute Spirit) which is beyond both Matter and Spirit, the Perishable and the Imperishable or the Perceptible and the Imperceptible Cosmos has been described, in the Gītā without departing from the fixed terminology of the Sāṃkhyas; and therefore, when there is occasion to describe the Parabrahman, it becomes necessary for the Gītā to refer to it as the Imperceptible (avyakta) beyond the (Sāṃkhya) perceptible, or the Immutable (akṣara) beyond the (Sāṃkhya), immutable. See, for instance, the stanza given at the commencement of this chapter. In short, in reading the Gītā, one must always bear in mind that the words 'avyakta' and 'akṣara' are both used in the Gītā, sometimes with reference to the Prakṛti (Matter) of Sāṃkhya philosophy, and at other-times with reference to the Parabrahman of Vedānta philosophy, that is, in two different ways. That further Imperceptible, which is beyond the imperceptible of the Sāṃkhyas, is the Root of the Cosmos according to Vedānta. I shall later on explain how, as a result of this difference between Sāṃkhya and Vedānta philosophy regarding the Root

Element of the world, the form of Mokṣa according to- the philosophy of the Highest Self is also different from that according to Sāṃkhya philosophy.

When you once reject the Sāṃkhya dualism of Matter and Spirit, and say that there is a Third Element which is eternal, and which is at the root of the world in the form of a Parameśvara or a Puruṣottama, the further questions which necessarily arise are: what is the form of this third fundamental Element, and what is the nature of its relation to both Spirit and Matter? The three, Matter, Spirit, and!

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Absolute Īśvara are respectively called Cosmos, Jīva and Parabrahman in Metaphysics (i.e., the philosophy of the Absolute Self). The main object of Vedānta philosophy is to determine the exact nature of, and the mutual relationship between, these three substances; and one finds this subject-matter discussed everywhere in the Upaniṣads. Nevertheless, there is no unanimity of opinion amongst Vedāntists on this point; some of them say that these three substances are fundamentally one, while others say that the Jīva (personal Self) and the Cosmos are fundamentally different from the Parameśvara, whether to a small or a large extent; and on that



account, the Vedāntists are divided into Advaitins (Monists), Viśiṣṭādvaitins (Qualified-Monists), and Dvaitins (Dualists).

All are unanimous in accepting the proposition that all the activities of the Jīva and of the Cosmos are carried on according to the will of the Parameśvara. But some believe that the form of these three substances is fundamentally homogenous and intact like ether; whereas, other Vedāntists say that since the Gross can never become homogeneous with the self-conscious, the personal Self (jīva ) and the Cosmos must be looked upon as fundamentally different from the Parameśvara, though they are both included in one Parameśvara, in the same way as the unity of a pomegranate is not destroyed on account of there being numerous grains in it; and whenever there is a statement in the Upaniṣads that all the three are 'one', that is to be understood as meaning 'one like the pomegranate'. When in this way, diversity of opinion had arisen as regards the form of the Self (jīva), commentators supporting different creeds have stretched the meanings not only of the Upaniṣads , but also of the words in the Gītā, in their respective commentaries. Therefore, the subject-matter really propounded in the Gītā has been neglected by these commentators, in whose opinion the principal subject-matter to be considered in the Gītā has been whether the Vedānta of the Gītā is Monistic or Dualistic. However, before considering this matter further, let us see what the Blessed Lord has Himself said in the Gītā about the mutual relationship between

the Cosmos (prakṛti), Jīva (ātman or puruṣa), and Parabrahman (Paramātman or Puruṣottama, i.e.,

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Absolute Ātman or Absolute Spirit). My readers will see- from what follows that there is unanimity on this matter between the Gītā and the Upaniṣads, and all the ideas in the Gītā are, to be found in the Upaniṣads, which were earlier in point of time.

In describing the Puruṣottama, Para-puruṣa, Paramātman. or Parabrahman, which is beyond both Matter and Spirit, the Bhagavadgītā has first said that it has its two forms, namely the vyakta and the avyakta (that is, the one which is perceptible to the eyes, and the one which is imperceptible to the eyes). It is clear that the vyakta form out of these two, that is to say, the form which is perceptible to the organs, must be possessed of qualities (saguṇa). Then remains the imperceptible form. It is true that this form is avyakta, that is, it is not perceptible to the organs; but from the fact that it is imperceptible to the organs, it does not follow that it must be qualityless; because, though it might not be perceptible to the eyes, it can still possess all kinds of qualities in a subtle form. Therefore, the Imperceptible also has been further subdivided into saguṇa (possessed of qualities), saguṇa-nirguṇa (qualified and qualityless) and nirguṇa (qualityless). The word 'guṇa' is

here intended to mean and include all the qualities which can be perceived not only by the external organs, but also by the Mind. As the Blessed Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was a living incarnation of the Paramēśvara, was personally standing in front of Arjuna to advise him, He has indicated Himself in the first person by referring to His perceptible form in the following phrases in various places in the Gītā. "Prakṛti is My form " (9. 8); "the Jīva (Self) is a part of Me" (15.7); "I am the Ātman inhabiting the heart of all created things " (10. 20); " all the various glorious (śrīmat) or magnificent (vibhūtimat) beings which exist in the world have been created out of a part of Me" (10.41);. "keep your mind fixed on Me and become My devotee " (9.34); "in that way, you will come to be merged, in Me. I am telling you this confidently, because you are dear to Me" (18.65); and after having satisfied Arjuna by showing him His Cosmic Form that all the moveable and the immoveable Cosmos was actually contained in His perceptible

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form, He has ultimately advised Arjuna, that, as it was easier to worship the perceptible form than to worship the imperceptible form, he should put faith in Him (Gī. 12.8), and that He was the fundamental repository of the Brahman, of perennial Release, of eternal Religion and of beatific happiness (Gī. 14.27). Therefore, one may safely, say that the Gītā from

beginning to end describes only the perceptible form of the Blessed Lord.

But one cannot, on that account, look upon as correct the opinion of some, followers of the Path of Devotion or of some commentators, that a perceptible Parameśvara is considered to be the ultimate object of attainment in the Gītā; because, side by side with the descriptions referred to above of His perceptible form, the Blessed Lord has Himself stated that it is illusory, and that His imperceptible form, which is beyond (para) that perceptible form, and which is not cognisable by the organs, is His principal form. For instance, He says:

avyaktaṁ vyaktim āpannam manyante mām  
abuddhayaḥ ।

paraṁ bhāvam ajānanto mamāvyayam anuttamam ॥

that is, "whereas I am imperceptible to the organs, ignorant people consider Me as perceptible and do not take cognisance of My superior and imperceptible form which is beyond the perceptible form" (7.24); and farther on, in the next verse (7.25), He has said:— "as I am clothed in My YOGA-MĀYĀ (illusory form), ignorant people do not recognise Me". In the same way, He has' given the explanation of His perceptible form in the fourth chapter (4.6) as follows: "although I am not subject to birth and am eternal, yet I embody Myself in My own Prakṛti and take, birth, that is, become perceptible by My own MĀYĀ (svātmamāyā)". He has said later on in the

seventh chapter that: "Matter made up of three constituents is my DIVINE ILLUSION, those who conquer that ILLUSION become merged in Me; and those low-natured fools whose perception is destroyed by it, are not merged in Me." (7.14, 15), and He has ultimately in the eighteenth chapter advised Arjuna as follows: "O Arjuna! the Īśvara resides in the hearts of all living beings in the form of Self (jīva), and he controls the activities of all created beings by his ILLUSION as if they

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were machines". It is stated in the Nārāyaṇīya chapter in the Śāntiparva in the Mahābhārata that the Blessed Lord had shown to Nārada also that Cosmic Form which He had shown to Arjuna (Śān. 339); and I have explained already in the first chapter that the Gītā advocates the Nārāyaṇīya or the Bhāgavata religion. After the Blessed Lord had thus shown to Nārada His Cosmic Form with its myriad eyes, colours and other visible qualities, He says to him:

māyā hy eṣā māyā sṛṣṭā yan mām paśyasi nārada |  
sarvabhūtaguṇair yuktam naivam tvam jñātum arhasi  
|| (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 339. 44).

that is, "that My form which you see is an ILLUSION (māyā) created by Me; but do not, on that account, carry away the impression that I am possessed of the same qualities as are

possessed by created things"; and then He goes on to say: "My real form is all-pervasive, imperceptible, and eternal and that form is realised by the Released." (Śān. 339. 48). We must, therefore, say that the Cosmic Form, which had been shown to Arjuna as stated in the Gītā, was illusory. In short, although the Blessed Lord has attached importance to His perceptible form for purposes of worship, the doctrine laid down by the Gītā will, from the above statements, be clearly seen to be that (i) the excellent and superior form of the Parameśvara is His imperceptible form, that is, the form which is not cognisable by the organs; (ii) that His changing from the Imperceptible to the Perceptible is His MĀYĀ (Illusion); and (iii) that unless a man conquers this Māyā, and realises the pure and imperceptible form of the Parameśvara, which is beyond the Māyā, he cannot attain Release. I will consider later on in detail what is meant by MĀYĀ . It becomes quite clear from the statements quoted above that the theory of Māyā was not an invention of Śrī Śaṁkarācārya, and that even before his time it was an accepted theory in the Bhagavadgītā, the Mahābhārata, and also in the Bhāgavata religion. Even in the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad, the creation of the Cosmos is described as follows:— "māyām tu prakṛtim vidyān māyinaṁ tu maheśvaram" (Śve. 4.10), that is, "Māyā is the Prakṛti (the Sāṁkhya Prakṛti)

and the Lord of that Māyā is the Parameśvara; that Parameśvara creates the universe by His Māyā (Illusive Force)".

Although it is thus clear that the superior form of the Parameśvara is not perceptible, but is imperceptible, yet, it is necessary to consider whether this imperceptible form has qualities or is qualityless; because, we have before ourselves the example of a qualityful imperceptible substance in the form of the Sāṃkhya Prakṛti which, being imperceptible, is at the same time possessed of qualities, that is, which possesses the sattva, rajas, and tamas qualities; and according to some persons, the imperceptible and superior form of the Parameśvara must also be considered qualityful in the same way. These people say that in as much as the imperceptible Parameśvara creates the perceptible Cosmos, though He may do so by His Māyā (Gī. 9.8), and as He also resides in the heart of everybody and makes them carry on their various activities (18.61); in as much as He is the recipient and the Lord of all sacrifices (9.24); in as much as all the Bhāvas (that is, rational activities) in the shape of pain and happiness of all living beings spring from Him (10.5); in as much as He is the one who creates devotion in the hearts of living beings; and as "labhate ca tataḥ kāmān mayaivaḥ vihitān hi tāt" (7.22), that is, as "He is the giver of the result of the desires of living beings"; therefore, though He may be imperceptible, that is, though He may not be perceptible to the organs, yet He must be looked

upon as possessed of the qualities of mercy, potentiality etc., that is, possessed of qualities (saguṇa). But on the other hand, the Blessed Lord Himself says: "na māṁ karmāṇi limpanti", that is, "I am never polluted by Action" or, which is the same thing, by qualities (4.14); foolish people suffer from MOHA (ignorance) as a result of the qualities of Prakṛti, and look upon the Ātman as the doer (3.27; 14.19); as this eternal and non-active Parameśvara inhabits the hearts of living beings in the form of Jīva (13.31), people, who are overwhelmed by ignorance, become confused, though the Parameśvara is really speaking untouched by their activity or action (5.14, 15). It is not that the forms of the Parameśvara who is imperceptible, (that is, imperceptible to the organs) have thus been described as only two, namely,

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qualityful (saguṇa) and qualityless (nirguṇa); but in some places both the forms are naked up in describing the imperceptible Parameśvara. For instance, there are mutually contradictory saguṇa-nirguṇa descriptions of the Parameśvara in the ninth chapter of the Gītā where it is stated that: "bhūtabhṛt na ca bhūtastho" (9.9), that is, "I am the fundamental support of all created things, and yet, I am not in them", and in the thirteenth chapter, where it is stated that: "the Parabrahman is neither sat (real) nor asat, i.e., illusory" (13.12), "It appears to be possessed of all organs, yet, is devoid



of organs, and is qualityless, and at the same time the experiencer of the qualities" (13.14); "It is distant, and yet It is near" (13.15); "It is undivided, and yet It appears to be divided" (13.16). Nevertheless, in the beginning of the Gītā, already in the second chapter, it is stated that "this Ātman is imperceptible, unimaginable (acintya) and immutable, i.e., avikārya" (2.25); and there is in the thirteenth chapter, a description of the superiority of the imperceptible form of the Paramēśvara, which is pure, qualityless (nirguṇa), unorganised (niravayava), unchanging (nirvikāra), unimaginable (acintya) and eternal (anādi), in the following words:— "this absolute Ātman (Paramātmā) is eternal, qualityless, and inexhaustible, and therefore, though It might reside in the body, It does nothing and is not effected by anything" (13.31).

As in the Bhagavadgītā, so also in the Upaniṣads is the form of the imperceptible Paramēśvara found described in three ways, that is, sometimes as being saguṇa (qualityful), sometimes as saguṇa-nirguṇa (qualityful and qualityless), and sometimes as nirguṇa (qualityless). It is not that one must always have a visible icon before oneself for purposes of worship. It is possible to worship a form which is indefinite (nirākāra), that is, which is imperceptible to the eyes and the other organs of Perception. But, unless that which is to be worshipped is perceptible to the Mind, though it might be imperceptible to the eyes and other organs of perception, its worship will be impossible. Worship means contemplation, visualising by the

Mind (manas) or meditation; and unless the Mind perceives some other quality of the object of contemplation— even if it cannot perceive its form – how can the Mind contemplate on it? Therefore

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wherever the contemplation, mental visualisation or meditation, of or on the imperceptible Parameśvara, that is, on the; Parameśvara who is not visible to the eyes, has been mentioned. in the Upaniṣads, He has been considered as possessed of qualities (saguṇa). These qualities which are imagined to exist in the Parameśvara are more or less comprehensive or more or less sātत्वika according to the merit of the worshipper, and' everyone gets the result of his worship in the measure of his faith. It is stated in the Chāndogyaopaniṣad (3.14.1) that "man (puruṣa) is the embodiment of his determination (i.e., he is kratumaya), and he gets his meed after death, according to his 'kratu' (determination)"; and it is also stated in the Bhagavadgītā that: "those who worship deities are merged in the deities, and those who worship ancestors are merged in the ancestors (Gītā 9.25), or "yo yacchraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ", that is, "every, one obtains results according to his own faith (17.3). Necessarily, therefore, different qualities of the imperceptible Parameśvara to be worshipped have been, described in the Upaniṣads according to the difference in the spiritual merit of

the worshipper. This portion of the Upaniṣads is technically called, 'VIDYĀ'. Vidyā means the path (in the form of worship) of reaching the Īśvara, and any chapter in which such path is described has the suffix 'vidyā' placed at the end of its name. Many forms of worship are described in the Upaniṣads such as Śāṇḍilya-vidyā (Chān. 3.14), Puruṣa-vidyā (Chān. S. 16, 17), Paryāmka-vidyā (Kauṣī. I) Prāṇopāsanā (Kauṣī. 2) etc., etc., and all these forms have been dwelt upon in the third, section of the third chapter of the Vedānta-Sūtras. In these chapters, the imperceptible Parameśvara has been described as qualityful in the following terms: e. g., 'manomaya' (mind- embodied), 'prāṇaśarīra' (embodiment of Vital Force), 'bhārūpa' (of shining appearance), 'satyasamkalpa' (Truth-formed), 'ākāśātmā' (ether-like), 'sarvakarmā' (all-capable), 'sarvakāma' (fulfiller of all desires), 'sarvagandha' (embodiment of all scents), and 'sarvarasa', i.e., embodiment of all tastes (Chān., 3.14.2); and in the Taittirīyopaniṣad (Tai. 2.1 – 5; 3.2 – 6) the worship of the Brahman in a rising scale has been described, as the worship of food, life, mind, practical knowledge, (vijñāna), and joy (ānanda); and in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Gārgya

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Bālāki has prescribed to Ajātaśatru the worship of the Spirit in the Sun, the Moon, ether, the air, fire, water, or the cardinal points, as being the form of the Brahman; but Ajātaśatru has told him that the true Brahman is beyond all these, and

ultimately maintained that the worship of Vital Force (prāṇopāśanā) is the highest. But this list does not end here. All the forms of the Brahman mentioned above are technically called 'pratīka' (symbols), that is to say, an inferior form of the Brahman adopted for worship, or some sign indicating the Brahman; and when this form is kept before the eyes in the shape of an idol, it becomes a 'pratimā' (icon). But all the Upaniṣads lay down the doctrine that the real form of the Brahman is different from this (Kena 1.2.8). In some places, this Brahman is defined so as to include all qualities in only three qualities, as in the following expressions: "satyaṁ jñānam anantaṁ brahma" (Taitti. 2.1), or "vijñānam ānandaṁ brahma" (Br. 3.9.28), or that the Brahman is of the form of satya (sat), jñāna (cit), ānanda (joy), or is 'saccidānanda' in form. And in other places, there are descriptions which include mutually contradictory qualities, in the same way as in the Bhagavadgītā, like the following: "the Brahman is neither sat (real) nor asat, i.e., illusory" (Rg. 10.129), or is "aṇor aṇīyān mahato mahīyān", that is, smaller than an atom and larger than the largest (Katha 2.20), or "tad ejati tannaijati tad dūre tad antike", that is, "It does not move and yet It moves, It is far away and yet It is near (Īśā 5; Muṇ. 3.1.7), or "It has the appearance of possessing the qualities of all organs" '(sarvendriyaguṇabhāsa), and yet is 'sarvendriyavivarjita', i.e., devoid of all organs (Śveta. 3.17). Mṛtyu, in advising Naciketā, has kept aside all these descriptions, and said that the Brahman is something which is beyond righteousness, beyond

that which is done and that which has not been done, and beyond that which has happened and that which is capable of happening, i.e., 'bhavya' (Kaṭha 2.14); and similar descriptions are given by Brahmadeva to Rudra in the chapter on the Nārāyaṇīya religion in the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 351.11.); and by Nārada to Śuka in the chapter on Mokṣa (331.44). Even in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (Bṛ. 2.3.2), it is stated in the beginning that there are three

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iconical forms of the Brahman, namely, earth, water, and fire and two non-iconical forms, namely, air and ether; and it is then stated that the forms or colours of the ether-formed (sārabhūta) spirits into which these non-iconical forms are transformed, change; and it is ultimately stated that "neti, neti", that is, "It is not this", "It is not this", that is to say, whatever has been described so far, is not the Brahman; the Parabrahman is something which is beyond (para) this non-iconical or iconic substance (which can be identified by Name and Form) , and is 'agrhya', i.e., incomprehensible, and 'avarṇanīya', i.e., indescribable (Bṛ. 2.3.7 and Ve. Sū. 3.2.22). Nay, the Brahman is that which is beyond all objects whatsoever which can be named; and the words "neti, neti", that is, "It is not this, It is not this" have become a short symbol to show the imperceptible and qualityless form of that Brahman; and the same description has appeared four times in

the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (Bṛ. 3.2.29; 4.2.4; 4.4.22; and 4.5.15); and in the same way, there are also descriptions in other Upaniṣads of the qualityless and unimaginable form of the Parabrahman, such as, "yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha" (Taitti. 2.9), or "adreśyaṁ (adrśya), agrāhyam" (Muṇ. 1.1.6), or "na cakṣuṣā gr̥hyate na 'pi vācā" (Muṇ. 3.1.8), that is, "That which is not visible to the eyes, and which cannot be described by speech", or:

aśabdam asparśam arūpam avyayam tathā 'rasam  
nityam agandhavaś ca yat |  
anādy anantaṁ mahataḥ paraṁ dhruvaṁ nicāyā tan  
mṛtyumukhāt pramucyate ||

that is, It does not possess the five qualities of sound, touch, colour, taste, and smell, which are possessed by the five primordial elements, and is without beginning, without end, and imperishable (See Ve. Sū. 3.2.22 – 30). In the description of the Nārāyaṇīya or Bhāgavata religion in the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata, the Blessed Lord has described His real form to Nārada as being "invisible, unsmellable, untouchable, qualityless, inorganic (niṣkama), unborn, eternal, permanent and inactive (niṣkriya); and said that such His form is known as

"vāsudeva paramātmā" (Vāsudeva, the Absolute Atman); and that He is the Parameśvara who has transcended the three constituents, and who creates and destroys the universe (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 339. 31 – 38).

Not only in the Bhagavadgītā but also in the Bhāgavata or Nārāyaṇīya religion described in the Mahābhārata, and even in the Upaniṣads, the imperceptible form of the Parameśvara is considered to be superior to His perceptible form, and this imperceptible form is again described in three ways F that is, as being qualityful, qualityful-qualityless and qualityless, as will appear from the quotations above. Now, how is one going to harmonise these three mutually contradictory forms with the superior and imperceptible form of the Parameśvara? Out of these three forms, the qualityful-qualityless or dual form may be looked upon as a step between the saṁguṇa (qualityful) and the nirguṇa (qualityless) or the ajñeya (unknowable); because, one can realise the qualityless form only by, in the first place, realising the qualityful form, and then omitting quality after quality; and it is in this rising grade that the worship of the symbol of the Brahman has been described in the Upaniṣads. For instance, in the Bhṛṅguvalli in the Taittirīyopaniṣad, Bhṛṅgu has said to Varuṇa in the first place that anna (food) is Brahman, and thereafter he has in a gradual order explained to him the other forms of the Brahman, namely, Vital Force (prāṇa), Mind (manas), diverse knowledge (vijñāna) and joy i.e., ānanda (Taitti. 3.2 – 6). Or, it may even be said that, since

that which has no qualities cannot be described by adjectives showing quality, it is necessary to describe it by mutually contradictory adjectives; because, when you use the words 'distant' or 'real (sat)' our mind gets inferentially the idea that there is some other thing, which is near or illusory (asat). But, if there is only one Brahman to be found on all sides, what can be called near or illusory, if one calls the Parameśvara distant or real (sat)? Therefore, one cannot but use such expressions as, 'It is neither distant nor near, It is neither real nor illusory' and thereby get rid of mutually dependent quality-couplets like distant and near, or illusory and real; and one has to take advantage of these mutually contradictory adjectives in ordinary conversation for

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showing that, that which remains, and which is qualityless, and is such as exists everywhere and at all times, in an -unrelated and independent state, is the true Brahman (Gī. 13.12). In as much as whatever is,, is Brahman, it is distant and it is also near, it is real or existent, and, at the same time, it is -unreal or illusory; and looking at the matter from another point of view, the same Brahman may be defined at the same time by mutually contradictory adjectives (Gī. 11.17; 13.15). But though, in this way, one justifies the dual qualification of 'qualityful-qualityless' yet, it still remains to explain how the two mutually contradictory qualifications of 'qualityful' and



^qualityless' can be applied to the same Parameśvara. When the imperceptible Parameśvara takes up a perceptible (vyakta) form which is cognisable by the organs, that may be said to be His Māyā or illusion; but when He changes from the Qualityless to the Qualityful without becoming perceptible to or cognisable by the organs, and remains imperceptible, how is He to be called? For instance, one and the same indefinite Parameśvara is looked upon by some as qualityless, and is described by the words "neti, neti", that is, "It is not this, It is not this"; whereas others consider him qualityful, that is, as possessing all qualities and being the doer of all things, and being kind. Then it becomes necessary to explain, what the reason for this is, and which is the more correct description, as also to explain how the entire perceptible universe and all living beings came into existence out of one qualityless and imperceptible Brahman. To say that the imperceptible Parameśvara, who brings all projects to a successful conclusion, is, as a matter of fact, qualityful, and that His description in the Upaniṣads and in the Gītā as 'qualityless' is an exaggeration or meaningless praise, would be like cutting at the very root of the philosophy of the Absolute Self; because, characterising as an exaggeration the conscious self-experience of great Ṛṣis, who, after concentrating their minds and after very minute and peaceful meditation, have expounded the doctrine, that that is the true form of the Brahman which: "yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha" (Tai. 2.9), that is, "is unrealisable by the mind, and which

cannot be described by speech"; and saying that the true Brahman must be qualityful, because our minds cannot

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grasp the idea of an eternal and qualityless Brahman, would be as reasonable as saying that one's own candle-light is superior to the Sun! It would be different, of course, if this qualityless form of the Parameśvara had not been explained and justified in the Upaniṣads or in the Gītā; but such is not the case. The Bhagavadgītā does not rest with saying that the superior and true form of the Parameśvara is imperceptible,, and that His taking up the form of the perceptible Cosmos is His MĀYĀ (Gī. 4.6). The Blessed Lord has said to Arjuna in clear and unmistakable terms that: "as a result of MOHA (ignorance) arising from the qualities of Prakṛti, FOOLISH PEOPLE consider the (imperceptible and qualityless) Ātman as the performer of Actions" (Gī. 3.27 – 29); the Īśvara does nothing, and people are deceived as a result of IGNORANCE (Gī. 5.15); that is to say, though the imperceptible Ātman or the Absolute Īśvara is fundamentally qualityless (Gī. 13.31), people as a result of 'confusion' or 'ignorance' foist on Him, qualities like activity etc., and make Him qualityful and imperceptible (Gī. 7.24). From this, it follows that the true- doctrines of the Gītā about the form of the Parameśvara are- that:– (1) though there is any amount of description of the- perceptible form of the Parameśvara in the Gītā, yet. His fundamental and superior

form is imperceptible and qualityless and people look upon Him as qualityful by IGNORANCE or MORA; (2) the Sāṃkhya Prakṛti is His perceptible diffusion that is to say, the whole of this cosmos is the ILLUSION of the Parameśvara; and (3) the Sāṃkhya Puruṣa, that is, the personal Self, is fundamentally of the same form as the Parameśvara, and is qualityless and inactive -like the- Parameśvara, but people consider him as a doer (kartā) as a result of IGNORANCE. The same are the doctrines of Vedānta philosophy. But in later Vedānta treatises, some amount of distinction is made between Māyā (illusion) and Avidyā (ignorance) in enunciating these doctrines. For instance, in the Pañcadaśī, it is stated in the beginning, that the Ātman and the Parabrahman are originally identical, that is, are both of the form of the Brahman, and that when this Brahman, in the form of Consciousness (cit) is reflected in the form of Māyā (Illusion), Prakṛti composed of the sattva, rajas and tamas

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constituents (the Sāṃkhya fundamental Prakṛti) comes into existence. But later on, this Māyā is subdivided into 'māyā' (illusion) and 'avidyā' (ignorance); and it is stated that we have pure 'māyā' when the pure (śuddha) sattva component, out of the three components of this Māyā is preponderant, and the Brahman which is reflected in this pure maya, is called the qualityful or perceptible Īśvara (Hiraṇya-garbha); and, if this

sattva component is impure (aśuddha), that Māyā becomes 'avidyā' (ignorance) and the Brahman which is reflected in it is given the name of 'jīva' (Pañca. 1.15 – 17). From this point of view, it is necessary to make a two-fold distinction between one and the same Māyā, by looking upon maya as the cause of the 'perceptible Īśvara' springing out of the Parabrahman, and 'avidyā' as the cause of the 'Jīva' springing but of the Parabrahman. But, this distinction has not been made in the Gītā. The Gītā says that the Jīva becomes confused (7. =4 – 15) as a result of the same Māyā by means of which the Blessed Lord takes up his perceptible or qualityful form (7.25), or by means of which the eight-fold Prakṛti, that is, all the various objects in the world are born from Him (4. 6). The word 'avidyā' does not occur anywhere in the Gītā, and where it appears in the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad, it is used to signify the diffusion of Māyā (Sveta 5. 1). I shall, therefore, disregard the subtle difference made in later Vedantic treatises between avidyā and maya in relation to the Jīva and the Īśvara, merely for purposes of facility of exposition, and take the words māyā, avidyā and ajñāna as synonymous, and shortly and scientifically deal with the question as to what is ordinarily the elementary form of this Māyā with its three constituents or of avidyā, ajñāna, or moha, and also how the doctrines of the Gītā or of the Upaniṣads can be explained with reference to that form.

Although the words nirguṇa and saguṇa are apparently insignificant, yet, when one considers all the various things which they include, the entire Cosmos verily stands in front of one's eyes. These two small words embrace such numerous and ponderous questions as: how has the unbroken entity of that eternal Parabrahman, which is the Root of the Cosmos, been broken up by its acquiring the numerous activities or

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qualities which are perceptible to human organs, though it was originally ONE, inactive, and apathetic?; or, how is that, which was fundamentally homogeneous, now seen to be transformed into distinct, heterogeneous, and perceptible objects?; how has that Parabrahman, which is nirvikāra (immutable), and which does not possess the various qualities of sweetness, pungency, bitterness, solidity, liquidity, heat or cold, given rise to different kinds of tastes, or to more or less of solidity or liquidity, or to numerous couples of opposite qualities, such as, heat and cold, happiness and pain, light and darkness, death and immortality?; how has that Parabrahman, which is peaceful and undisturbed, given rise to numerous kinds of voices or sounds?; how has that Parabrahman, which does not know the difference of inside or outside, or distant or near, acquired the qualities of being here or further away, near or distant, or towards the East or towards the West, which are qualities -of directions or of place 1; how has that

Parabrahman, which is immutable, unaffected by Time, permanent and immortal been changed into objects, which perish in a longer or shorter space of time?; or how has that Parabrahman, which is not affected by the law of causes and products, come before us in the form of a cause and a product, in the shape of earth and the earthenware pot? Or, to express the same thing in short, we "have now to consider how that which was ONE, acquired diversity; how that which was non-dual, acquired duality; how that which was untouched by opposite doubles (dvaṁdva), "became affected by these opposite doubles; or,, how that which was unattached (asaṅga), acquired attachment (saṅga). Sāṅkhya philosophy has got over this difficulty by imagining a duality from the very beginning, and by saying that qualityful Prakṛti with its three constituents, is eternal and independent, in the same way as the qualityless and eternal Puruṣa (Spirit). But, not only is the natural tendency of the human mind, to find out the fundamental Root of the world, not satisfied by this duality, but it also does not bear the test of logic Therefore, the writers of the Upaniṣads have gone beyond Prakṛti and Puruṣa, and laid down the doctrine that the qualityless (nirguṇa) Brahman, which is even higher than the saṁdānanda Brahman, i.e., the Brahman possessed of the

qualities of eternal Existence (sat), Consciousness (cit), and Joy (ānanda), is the root of the world. But, I must now explain how the Qualityful (saḡuṇa) came out of the Qualityless (nirḡuṇa); because, it is a doctrine of Vedānta, as of Sāṃkhya philosophy, that that which is not, is not; and that that which is, can never come into existence out of that which is not. According to this doctrine, the Qualityful (saḡuṇa), that is, the qualityful objects in the world cannot come into existence out of the Brahman which is qualityless (nirḡuṇa). Then, whence has the Qualityful come? If one says that the Qualityful does not exist, then, one can see it before one's eyes; and, if one says that the Qualityful is Real (existing), in the same way as the Qualityless, then, in as much as the forms of qualities like, sound, touch, form, taste etc., which are perceptible to the organs, are one to-day and different to-morrow, that is, are ever-changing, or mother words, are perishable, mutable, and inconstant, one has to say, that the all-pervading Parameśvara is, so far at least as this qualityful -part of Him is concerned, (imagining of course, the Parameśvara to be divisible), perishable. And how can one give the name of Parameśvara to something, which is divisible and perishable, and which always acts in a dependent way, and subject to the rules which regulate the creation? In short, whether you imagine that all qualityful objects, which are perceptible to the organs, have sprung out of the five primordial elements, or whether you imagine with the Sāṃkhyas or the material scientists, that all objects have been created from one and the same imperceptible but qualityful

fundamental Matter, whichever position you take up, so long as this fundamental Prakṛti (Matter) has not been divested of perishable qualities, one certainly cannot describe these five primordial elements or this fundamental substance in the shape of Prakṛti as the imperishable, independent, or immortal element of the world. Therefore, he who wants to accept the theory of Prakṛti, must either give up the position that the Parameśvara is eternal, independent and immortal, or he must try to find out what lies beyond the five primordial elements, or beyond the fundamental qualityful Prakṛti known as ' Prakṛti ' ; and there is no third alternative. In the same way, as it is impossible to

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quench thirst by a mirage, or to get oil out of sand, so also is it futile to hope that immortality can ever come out of that which is palpably perishable; and, therefore, Yājñavalkya has definitely told Maitreyī that, however much of wealth one may acquire, yet, "amṛtatvasya tu nāśāsti vittena" (Br. 2.4.2), i.e., "Do not entertain the hope of obtaining immortality by such wealth". Well: if you say that immortality is unreal, then, every man entertains the hope that the reward which he wishes to obtain from a king should be available for enjoyment after his death to his sons, grand-sons etc., so long as the Sun and the Moon last; or, we even find that, if there is a chance for a man to acquire long-standing or permanent fame, he does not care



even for life. Not only are there prayers of the ancient Ṛṣis like: "O Indra! give us 'akṣita śrava', that is, imperishable fame or wealth" (Ṛg. 1.9.7) or, "Soma! make me immortal in the sphere of Vaivasvata (Yama)" (Ṛg. 9.133.8) to be found in extremely ancient works like the Ṛgveda, but even in modern times, pure Materialists like Spencer, Kant, and others are found maintaining that "it is the highest moral duty of mankind in this world to try to obtain the permanent happiness of the present and future generations, without being deluded by transient happiness". From where has this idea of permanent happiness, beyond the span of one's own life, that is to say, of immortality come? If one says that it is inherent nature, then, one is bound to admit that there is some immortal substance beyond this perishable body; and, if one says that such an immortal substance does not exist, then, one cannot explain in any other way that mental tendency which one oneself actually experiences. In this difficulty, many Materialists advise that, as these questions can never be solved, we should not attempt to solve them, or allow our minds to travel beyond the qualities or objects which are to be found in the visible world. This advice seems easy to follow; but, who is going to control the natural desire for philosophy which exists in the human mind, and how?; and, if this unquenchable desire for knowledge is once killed, how is knowledge to be increased? Ever since the day when the human being came into this world he has been continually thinking of what the fundamental immortal principle at the root of this visible and perishable

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world, is; and, how he will reach it; and, however much the Material sciences are developed, this inherent tendency of the human mind towards the knowledge of the immortal principle will not be lessened. Let the material sciences be developed as much as they can, philosophy will always packet all the knowledge of Nature contained in them, and run beyond! That was the state of things three or four thousand years ago, and the same state of things is now seen in Western countries. Nay, on that day when this ambition of a human being comes to an end, we will have to say of him "sa vai mukto 'thavā paśuḥ", that is, "he is either a Released soul, or a brute!"

No philosophers from any other country have yet found an explanation, which is more reasonable than the one given- in our ancient treatises, about the existence of an Element, which is unbounded by time or place, and is immortal, eternal, independent, homogeneous, sole, immutable, all- pervasive, and qualityless, or as to how the qualityful creation came into existence out of that qualityless Element. The modern German philosopher Kant has minutely examined the reasons why man acquires a synthetic knowledge of the heterogeneity of the external universe, and he has given the same explanation as

our philosophers, but in a clearer way and according to modern scientific methods; and although Haegel has gone beyond Kant, yet his deductions do not go beyond those of Vedānta. The same is the case with Schopenhauer. He had read the Latin translation of the Upaniṣads, and he himself has admitted that he has in his works borrowed ideas from this "most valuable work in the world's literature". But it is not possible to consider in a small book like this, these difficult problems and their pros and cons, or the similarity and dissimilarity between the doctrines of Vedānta philosophy, and the doctrines laid down by Kant and other Western philosophers, or to consider the minute differences between the Vedānta philosophy appearing in ancient treatises like the Upaniṣads and the Vedānta-Sūtras, and that expounded in later works. Therefore, I have in this book broadly referred to only that portion of them to which it is necessary to refer in order to impress on the minds of my readers the veracity, the importance, and the reasons for the Metaphysical

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doctrines in the Gītā, on the authority principally of the Upaniṣads, and the Vedānta-Sūtras, and of the Bhāṣyas (commentaries) of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya on them. In order to determine what lies beyond the Sāṃkhya Dualism of Matter and Spirit, it is not sufficient to stop with the distinction made by Dualists between the Observer of the world and the visible

world; and one has to consider minutely the form of the knowledge which the man who sees the world gets of the external world, as also how that knowledge is acquired, and what that knowledge consists of. Animals see the objects in the external world in the same way as they are seen by men.

But, as man has got the special power of synthesising the experience impressed on his mind through organs of Perception like the eyes, ears, etc., he has got the special quality that he acquires the knowledge of the objects in the external world. It has already been explained by me in the chapter on the Body and the Ātman, that that power of synthesis, which is responsible for this special feature in man, is a power which is beyond Mind and Reason, that is to say, is a power of the Ātman. Man acquires the knowledge, not of only one object, but also and in the same way, of the various relations in the shape of causes and products, between the diverse objects in the world – which are known as the laws or principles of Creation; because, although the various objects in the world might be visible to the eyes, yet, the relation of causes and products between them is not a thing which is actually visible; and that relation is determined by the intellectual activity of the one who sees. For instance, when a particular object has passed before our eyes, we decide that he is a soldier by seeing his form and his movement, and that impression remains fixed in our minds. When another similar object passes before our eyes in the wake of the first object,

the same intellectual process is repeated, and our Reason decides that that object is a second soldier; and when, in this way, we, by our memory remember the various impressions, which our mind has received one after the other, but at different moments or times, and synthesise them, we get the synthetical knowledge of these various impressions that an 'army' has been passing in front of our eyes. When the mind has decided by looking at

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the form of the object which comes after the army, that he is a 'king', the former impression about the army, and the new-impression about the king, are once more synthesised by our mind, and we say that the procession of the king is passing. From this, it becomes necessary for us to say, that our knowledge of the world is not some gross object which is actually perceived by the organs, but that 'knowledge' is the result of the synthesis of the various impressions received by the mind, which is made by the 'Observing Ātman'; and for the same reason Knowledge (Jñāna) has been defined in the Bhagavadgītā by the words: "avibhaktaṁ vibhakteṣu",. that is, by saying that: "that is true knowledge by means of which we realise the non-diversity or unity in that which is diverse or

different" (Gī. 18. 20). [1] But if one again minutely considers what that is of which impressions are first received on the mind through the medium of the organs, it will be seen that though by means of the eyes, ears, nose etc., we may get knowledge of the form, sound, smell or other qualities of various objects, yet, our organs cannot tell us anything about the internal form of that substance which possesses these external qualities. We see that wet earth is manufactured into a pot, but we are not able to know what the elementary fundamental form of that substance which we call 'wet earth', is. When the mind has severally perceived the- various qualities of stickiness, wetness, dirtiness of colour, or rotundity of form in the earthenware pot, the 'Observing' Atman synthesises all these various impressions, and says r "this is wet earth"; and later on when the Mind perceives the qualities of a hollow and round form or appearance, or a firm sound, or dryness of this very substance (for there is no reason, to believe that the elementary form of the substance has changed), the 'Observer' synthesises all these qualities and calls the substance a 'pot'. In short, all the change or difference- takes place only in the quality of 'rūpa' or 'ākāra', that is, 'form', and the same fundamental substance gets different names

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[1] Cf. "Knowledge is first produced by the synthesis of what is manifold". Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, p. 64, Max Müller's , translation, 2nd Edition.

after the 'Observer' has synthesised the impressions made by these various qualities on the Mind. The most simple examples of this are the sea and the waves, or gold and ornaments; because the qualities of colour, solidity or liquidity, and weight, in these various objects, remain unchanged and the 'rūpa' (form) and name are the only two things which change; and, therefore! these easy illustrations are always mentioned in Vedānta philosophy. The gold remains the same; but the 'Observer', who synthesises the impressions received by the Mind, through the organs, of the changes which have taken place at different times in its form, gives to this fundamentally one and the same substance different names at different times, e. g., once 'necklace', at another time 'armlets'; once 'bangles', and at another time a 'necklet'; once 'rings', and at another time a 'chandrahāra' etc. These various NAMES which we give to objects from time to time, and the various FORMS of those objects by reason of which those names changed, are referred to in the Upaniṣads as 'NĀMA-RŪPA' (Name and Form) and this technical term also includes all other qualities (Chān. 6.3 and 4; Br. 1.4.7); because, whatever quality is taken, it must have some Name or Form. But although these NAMES and FORMS change every moment, yet, there is underlying them some substance, which is different from that Name and Form, and which never changes; and it becomes necessary for us to say,. that numerous films in the shape of Name and Form

have come on this fundamental substance, in the same way as some floating substance (taraṅga) comes on the surface of water. Our organs cannot perceive anything except Name and Form; therefore, it is true that our organs cannot realise that fundamental substance which is the substratum of these Names and Forms, but is different from them. But, though this Elementary Substance, which is the foundation of the entire universe, may be imperceptible, that is, uncognisable by the organs, yet, our Reason has drawn the definite inference that it is 'sat', that is, really and eternally to be found in and under this Name and Form, and never ceases to exist; because, if you say, that there is fundamentally nothing beyond the Name and Form which is perceptible to our organs, then a 'necklace' and

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'bangles' will become different objects, and there will be no foundation for the knowledge acquired by us, that both are made of one and the same substance, gold. All that we will be able to say is: 'this is a necklace', 'these are bangles'; but we will not be able to say that 'the necklace is of gold'. It, therefore, logically follows that that gold, with which we connect the necklace or chain embodied in a Name and Form by means of the words 'is of' in the sentences 'the necklace is of gold', 'the chain is of gold', etc., is not non-existent like the horn of the hare; and that the word 'gold' gives one the idea of that substance which has become the foundation of all golden



ornaments. When the same logical argument is applied to all the various objects in the world, we come to the conclusion that the various objects having Names and Forms which we come across, such as, stones, pearls, silver, iron, wood, etc., have come into existence as a result of different Names and Forms having been super-imposed on one and the same eternal substance; that all the difference is only in the Name and Form and not in the fundamental substance; and that there permanently exists at the bottom of all Names and Forms only one homogeneous substance. ' Existing at all times in a permanent form in all substances ' in this way, is technically known in Sanskrit as 'sattā-sāmānya'.

This doctrine of our Vedānta philosophy has been accepted as correct by modern Western philosophers like Kant and others; and this invisible substance, which is different from all Names and Forms, and which is the root of the universe embodied in Name and Form, is in their books referred to as 'Thing-in-itself' (vastu-tattva); and the Name and Form which becomes perceptible to the eyes and the other organs is called by them

"external appearance" [1]. But it is usual in Vedānta philosophy to refer to this everchanging external Appearance embodied in

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Name and Form as 'mithyā ' (illusory), or 'nāśavanta' (perishable), and to refer to the Fundamental Element as 'satya' (Real) or 'amṛta' (immortal). Ordinary people define the word 'satya' by saying 'cakṣur vai satyam', that is, "that which is seen by the- eyes is real"; and if one considers the ordinary course of life,, it is needless to say that there is a world of difference between seeing in a dream that one has got a lakh of rupees, or hearing, about a lakh of rupees, and actually getting a lakh of rupees. Therefore, the dictum 'cakṣur vai satyam' (i.e., that is Real, which is seen by the eyes) has been enunciated in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (Br. 5.14.4) in order to explain whether one should trust more one's eyes or one's ears, if one has merely heard something by mere hearsay, or if one has actually seen it. But, what is the use of this relative definition of 'satya (Reality) for a science by which one has to determine whether the rupee which goes under the visible

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[1] This subject-matter has been considered in the Critique of Pure Reason by Kant. He has named the fundamental substance underlying the world as "Ding an sich" (the Thing-in-itself); and I have translated those words by 'vastu-tattva'; the external appearance of Name and Form has been named by Kant as 'Erscheinung' (Appearance). According to Kant, the 'Thing-in-itself' cannot be known.

Name of 'rupee' or is recognised by its Form, namely, by its round' appearance, is Real '!' We also see in the course of ordinary affairs, that if there is no consistency in what a man says, and if he now says one thing and shortly afterwards another thing, people call him false. Then, why should not the same argument be applied to the Name and Form called 'rupee' (not to the underlying substance) and the rupee be called false or illusory? For, we can take away the Name and Form, 'rupee' of a rupee, which our eyes see to-day, and give it to-morrow the Name and Form of 'chain' or 'cup'; that is to say, we see by our own eyes that Names and Forms always change, that is, are not constant. Besides, if one says that nothing else is true except what one sees by one's eyes, then, we will be landed in the position of calling that mental process of synthesis by means of which we acquire the knowledge of the world, and which is not visible to our eyes, unreal or false; and, thereby,, we will have to say that all knowledge whatsoever which we acquire is false. Taking into account this and such other difficulties, the ordinary and relative definition of 'satya' namely, "that alone is 'satya' (Real) which can be seen by the eyes", is not accepted as correct; and the word 'satya' has been defined in the Sarvopaniṣad as meaning something which is imperishable, that is, which does not cease to exist,

though all other things have ceased to exist: and in the same way, satya has been defined in the Mahābhārata as:

satyaṁ nāmā 'vyayaṁ nityaṁ avikārī tathaiva ca । [1]  
(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 162. 10)

that is, "that only is Real which is avyaya (i.e., never destroyed), nitya (i.e., always the same), and avikārī (i.e., of which the form is never changed)". This is the principle underlying the fact that a person who now says one thing and, shortly afterwards another thing is called 'false' in common parlance. When we accept this non-relative definition of the Real (satya), one has necessarily to come to the conclusion that the Name and Form which constantly changes is false, though it is seen by the eyes; and that the immortal Thing-in-itself (vastu-tattva), which is at the bottom of and is covered by that Name and Form, and which always remains the same, is Real, though it is not seen by the eyes. The description of Brahman, which is given in the Bhagavadgītā in the following words, namely, "yaḥ so sarveṣu bhūteṣu naśyatsu na vinaśyati" (Gī. 8.20; 13.27), that is, "that is the immutable (akṣara) Brahman, which never ceases to exist, although all things, that is, the bodies of all things encased in Name and Form are

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[1] In defining the word 'real' (sat or satya), Green has said:– "whatever anything is really, it is unalterably" (Prolegomena to Ethics, §25.) This definition of Green and the definition in the Mahābhārata are fundamentally one and the same.

destroyed", has been given on the basis of this principle; and the same stanza has again appeared in the description of the Nārāyaṇīya or Bhāgavata religion in the Mahābhārata with the different reading "bhūtagrāmaśārīreṣu" instead of "yaḥ sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 339.23). In the same way, the meaning of the 16th and 17th stanzas of the second chapter of the Gītā is the same. "When, in Vedānta philosophy, the ornament is referred, to as 'mithyā' (illusory) and the gold as 'satya' (real), one has not to understand that comparison as meaning that the ornament is useless, or invisible to the eyes, or totally false,, that is, mere earth to which gold foil has been attached, or not in existence at all. The word 'mithyā' has been used there with reference to the qualities of colour, form etc., and of appearance

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of an object, that is, to its external appearance, and not to the fundamental substance; because, as must be borne in mind, the fundamental substance is always 'satya' (Real). The Vedāntist has to ascertain what the fundamental substance underlying the covering of Name and Form of various objects is; and that is the real subject-matter of philosophy. Even in ordinary life, we see that although a large sum may have been spent by us on labour for manufacturing a particular ornament, yet, it" one is forced to sell that ornament to a merchant in adverse circumstances, the merchant says to us: "I

do not take into account what expenses you have incurred per tola for manufacturing the ornament; if you are prepared to sell me this ornament as gold by weight, I will buy it" I If the same idea is to be conveyed in Vedānta terminology, we will have to say that, "the merchant sees the ornament to be illusory, and only the gold to be real". In the same way, if one wishes to sell a newly built house, the purchaser pays no attention to what amount has been spent for giving that house prettiness (rūpa-form), or convenience of arrangement (ākṛti = construction), and says that the house should be sold to him by the value of the timber and other material which has been used in constructing the house. My readers will get a clear idea from the above illustrations about the meaning of the reference by Vedāntists to the Name-d and Form-ed (nāmarūpātmaka) world as illusory and to the Brahman as real. When one says that the visible world is 'mithyā' (illusory), one is not to be understood as meaning that it is not visible to the eyes; the real meaning is that the numerous appearances of various objects in the world resulting from Time or Space and diversified by Name and Form are perishable, that is, 'mithyā' and that that imperishable and immutable substance which

exists eternally under the cloak of this Name and Form is permanent and real. The merchant considers bangles, anklets, chain, armlets, and other ornaments as 'mithyā ' (illusory) and gold alone as satya (real). But in the factory of the goldsmith of the world, various Names and Forms are given to one and the

same Fundamental Substance, and' such various ornaments as gold, stone, timber, water, air etc. are formed out of that Substance. Therefore, the Vedāntist goes a little deeper than

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the ordinary merchant, and looks upon all Names and Forms,, such as, gold, silver, or stone etc. as mithyā (illusory), and looks upon the Fundamental Substance being the substratum of all those objects, that is, the Thing- in-itself (vastu-tattva) as 'satya' (immutable or real). As this Thing-in-itself has no-qualities of Name, Form etc., it is impossible that it should ever- become perceptible to the organs like eyes etc. But not only can one form a definite inference, by means of one's Reason, that it must exist in an imperceptible form, though it is invisible to the eyes, or unsmellable by the nose, or untouchable by the hand, but one has also to come to the conclusion that the immutable 'THAT' in this world is the real Thing-in-itself. This is what is known as the Fundamental Real in the world. But, some foolish foreign scholars and some local scholars considered as 'philosophers', without taking into account these technical Vedantic meanings of the words 'satya' and 'mithyā', or taking the trouble to see whether or not it is possible for the word 'satya' to have a meaning different from what they think, ridicule Vedānta by saying: "that world which we actually see with our own eyes is called 'mithyā' (illusory) by the Vedāntists I Now, what is to be

done?" But as Yāska has said it, a pillar is not to blame because a blind man does not see it! It has been stated over and over again in the Chāndogya (6.1 and 7.1), Bṛhadāraṇyaka (1.6.3), Muṇḍaka (3.2.8), Praśna. (6. 5), and other Upaniṣads that the ever-changing (that is, perishable) Names and Forms are not real, and that he who wishes to see the Real (that is, permanent) Element, must extend his vision beyond these Names and Forms; and these Names and Forms have in the Kaṭha (2.5) and Muṇḍaka (1.2.9) been referred to as 'avidyā', and ultimately in the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad as 'māyā' (Śve. 4.10). In the Bhagavadgītā, the same meaning is conveyed by the words 'maya' 'moha', and 'ajñāna'. That which existed in the commencement of the world was without Name and Form, that is, it was qualityless and imperceptible; and the same thing later on becomes perceptible and qualityful, as a result of its acquiring Names and Forms (Bṛ. 1.4.7; and Chān, 6.1.2, 3). Therefore, the mutable and perishable Name and Form 1 is given the name 'Māyā' and the visible or qualityful world is said to

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be the illusory Māyic drama or 'līlā' of the Īśvara. From this point of view, the Sāṃkhya Prakṛti is nothing but Māyā composed of the sattva, rajas and tamas constituents, that is to say, Māyā possessing Name and Form, though it might be imperceptible; and the creation or extension of the perceptible



universe, described in the eighth chapter as having sprung from this Prakṛti, is also the evolution of that Māyā embodied in qualityful Names and Forms; because, whatever quality may be taken, it is bound to be visible to the organs, that is to say, to be embodied in Name and Form. All the Material sciences fall in this way into the category of Māyā. Take History, Geology, Electricity, Chemistry, Physics or any other science; all the exposition to be found in it is only of Names and Forms, that is to say, only of how a particular substance loses one Name and Form and acquires another Name and Form. For instance, these sciences only consider how and when that which is known as 'water' acquires the name of 'steam', or how various aniline dyes, having the red, green, blue, or various other colours, which are only differences of Name and Form, are formed from one black substance called coal-tar, etc. Therefore, by studying these sciences which are engrossed in Names and Forms, one cannot acquire the knowledge of the Real Substance, which is beyond Names and Forms; and it is clear that he who wishes to find the form of the Real Brahman must extend his vision beyond these Material sciences, that is to say, beyond these sciences which deal only with Names and Forms. And the same meaning is conveyed by the story at the commencement of the seventh chapter of the Chāndogyaopaniṣad. In the beginning of the story, Nārada went to Sanatkumāra, that is, to Skanda, and said:— "Give me knowledge of the Ātman". In reply, Sanatkumāra said to him: "Tell me what you have learnt, so that I will tell you what

comes next ". Nārada said:— "I have learnt all the Vedas, namely, the Ṛg. and the other Vedas, in all four, as also History and Purāṇas (which is the fifth Veda), and also Grammar, Mathematics, Logic, Fine Arts, Ethics, subsidiary parts of the Vedas (vedāṅga), Morality, Black Magic, Warfare (kṣetra-vidyā), Astrology, the science of Serpents, Deities etc.; but I have not thereby acquired the knowledge of the Ātman, and I have, therefore, come to you ".

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In reply to that, Sanatkumāra said:— "All that you have learnt deals only with Names and Forms and the true Brahman is far beyond this Nāma-Brahma (the Brahman qualified by Names)"; and he has afterwards gradually described to Nārada the Immortal Element in the form of the Absolute Spirit, which is beyond Names and Forms, that is to say, beyond the Sāṃkhya imperceptible Prakṛti, as also beyond Speech, Hope, Project, Mind, Reason (jñāna) and Life (prāṇa), and is superior to all of them.

All that has been said before may be summarised by saying that though the human organs cannot actually perceive or know anything except Names and Forms, yet, there must be some invisible, that is, imperceptible, eternal substance which is covered by this cloak of non-permanent Names and Forms;

and that, it is on that account that we get a synthetic knowledge of the world. Whatever knowledge is acquired, is acquired by the Ātman; and therefore, the Ātman is called the 'Jñātā' (Knower). Whatever knowledge is acquired by this Knower, is of the Cosmos defined by Name and Form; and, therefore, this external Cosmos defined by Name and Form is called 'Jñāna' (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 306.40); and the Thing-in-it-self (vastu-tattva) which is at the root of this Name-d and Fora-ed (nāmarūpātmaka) Cosmos is called the 'Jñeya'. Accepting this classification, the Bhagavadgītā says that the 'kṣetrajña ātmā' is the Jñātā and the eternal Parabrahman, uncognisable by the organs is the Jñeya (Gī. 13.12 – 17); and dividing Jñāna (Knowledge) subsequently into three parts, the Knowledge of the world arising on account of diversity or manifoldness, is called rājasa knowledge, and the synthetic knowledge ultimately obtained from this diversity is called sāttvika knowledge (Gī. 18.20, 21). To this an objection is raised by some to the effect that it is not proper for us to make the three-fold division of Jñātā, Jñāna, Jñeya (the Knower, Knowledge, and the To-Be-Known); and that there is no evidence before us for saying that there is anything in the world except that of which we get knowledge. The visible things, such as, cows, horses, etc., which are seen by us are nothing 'but the Knowledge which we have acquired; and although this Knowledge is Real, yet, as there is no means except

Knowledge itself for describing that of which this Knowledge has been acquired, we cannot say that there are any external objects besides this Knowledge which are independent substances, nor that there is some other independent substance, which is at the root of all these external objects; because, if there is no Knower, then there is no world. which can be' known. Looking at the matter from this point of view, the-third division of Jñeya out of Jñātā, Jñāna, and Jñeya drops-out, and the Jñātā and the Jñāna which he acquires, are the only two things which remain; and if this logic is carried a little further, then, in as much as the 'Knower' or 'Observer' is also a kind of Jñāna (Knowledge), nothing- else except Jñāna (Knowledge) remains. This is known as 'Vijñāna-vāda' and that has been accepted as correct by the Buddhists following the Yogācāra path, who have laid down the doctrine that there is nothing independent in this world except the Jñāna (Knowledge) or the Jñātā (Knower); nay, that even the world itself does not exist, and that whatever is, is nothing but the Knowledge of mankind. Even among Western writers, there are some who support this doctrine, like Hume and others; but Vedānta philosophy does not accept this doctrine, which has been refuted by Bādarāyaṇācārya in the Vedānta-Sūtras (Ve. Sū. 2.28 – 32), and by Śrīmat Śaṅkarācārya in his Bhāṣya (commentary) on those Sūtras. It is true that a man realises ultimately only the impressions made on his Mind; and this is

what we call 'Jñāna'; but if there is nothing else except this Jñāna, how can one account for the diversity which is realised by our Reason in the various kinds of Jñāna, e. g., between the 'cow' being a different Jñāna, the 'horse' being a different Jñāna, or 'I' being a different Jñāna? The mental process of acquiring knowledge is everywhere the same, and if there is nothing else except such Jñāna, then, how have the differences between a cow, a horse etc. arisen? If someone says that the Mind creates these different divisions of Knowledge at its sweet will like a dream-world, one cannot explain this somewhat of consistency which is to be found in the Jñāna acquired in a waking state, which is different from the dream-world (Ve. Sū. Śāṃ. Bhā. 2.2.29; 3.2.4). Besides, if you say that there is no other thing except Jñāna, and that the Mind of the 'Observer'

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creates all the various things, then each 'Observer' must get the ego-ised knowledge that "my mind, that is, I myself, am the pillar" or "I myself am the cow". But since such is not the case, and everyone gets the experience that he himself is something different and that the pillar, the cow etc. are substances which are different from himself, Śaṃkarācārya has adduced the doctrine that there must be some other independent external things, in the external world, which are the foundation of the Knowledge acquired by the Mind of the

Observer (Ve. Sū. Śām. Bhā. 3.2.28). Kant is of the same opinion, and he has clearly said that although the synthetical process of human Reason is necessary for acquiring the knowledge of the world, yet, this knowledge is not something self-created, that is, unfounded or new which has been spun out by human Reason, but is always dependent on the external things in the world. Here an objection may be raised that: "What! your Śamkarācārya once says that the external world is Mithyā (illusory); and for refuting the Buddhistic doctrines, the same Śamkarācārya maintains that the existence of the external world is as real as the existence of the Observer! How are you going to reconcile these two things?" This question has already been answered before. When the Ācārya calls the external world 'mithyā' (illusory) or 'asatya' (unreal), he is to be understood as saying that the visible Name and Form of the external universe is unreal, that is to say, perishable. But although the external appearance embodied in Name and Form is said to be illusory, yet, one does not thereby prejudice the doctrine that there is some Real substance at the bottom of it, which is beyond the reach of the organs. In short, just as we have laid down the doctrine in the chapter on the Body and the Ātman, that there is some permanent Ātman-Element at the root of the perishable Names and Forms, like the bodily organs etc., so also, have we to come to the conclusion that there is some permanent substance at the root of the external universe clothed in Names and Forms. Therefore, Vedānta philosophy has laid down the doctrine that there is under the

ever-varying (that is, illusory) appearance both of the physical organs and of the external world, there is some permanent (nitya), that is, Real (satya) substance. The next question is

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whether the two fundamental substances in these two cases are one and the same or are different. But before considering that question, I shall first consider precisely the allegation which is sometimes made as regards the modernity of that doctrine.

Some persons say that although the Vijñāna-vāda of the Buddhists is not acceptable to Vedānta philosophy, yet, in as much as the opinion of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya that the Name-d and Form-ed (nāmarūpātmaka) appearance of the external world, which is visible to the eyes, is illusory, and that the imperishable substance underlying it is Real – which is known as the 'MĀYĀ-VĀDA' – is not to be found in the ancient Upaniṣads, it cannot be considered as part of the original Vedānta philosophy. But, if one carefully considers the Upaniṣads, he will easily see that this objection is totally without foundation. I have already stated before that the word 'satya' (Real) is applied in ordinary parlance to those things which are actually visible to the eyes; Therefore, in some places in the Upaniṣads, the word 'satya' has been used in this

its ordinary meaning, and the Name-d and Form-ed external objects, visible to the eyes, have been called 'satya'; and the Fundamental Substance which is clothed by those Names and Forms is called 'amṛta'. For instance, in the Brhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (1.6.3), it is stated that "tadetadamṛtaṁ satyenacchannam", that is, "that amṛta is covered by satya"; and the words amṛta and satya have been immediately afterwards denned as: "prāṇa vā amṛtaṁ nāmarūpe satyaṁ tābhyāṁ ayaṁ prāṇaśchannam", that is, "prāṇa (Vitality) is amṛta (eternal) and Name and Form is satya (Real); the prāṇa is clothed by this satya in the shape of Name and Form". The word prāṇa is here used in the meaning of the Parabrahman in the form of prāṇa. From this it is seen that those things which are known as 'mithyā' and 'satya' in the later Upaniṣads, were originally respectively known as 'satya' and 'amṛta'. In some places, this amṛta is referred to as 'satyasya satyam', that is, "the ultimate satya (Reality), which is at the core of the satya (Reality) visible to the eyes" (Br. 2.3.6). But, the abovementioned objection does not become substantiated by reason of the fact merely that the visible universe has been referred to as satya in some places in the Upaniṣads; because,

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in the Brhadāraṇyaka itself, the final proposition stated is that everything else except the Ātman-formed Parabrahman is



'ārtam', that is, perishable (Br. 3.7.23). When the search for the Fundamental Substance underlying the world was first started, the world which was visible to the eyes was first looked upon as satya, and the investigators began to find out what other subtle satya was at its core. Then it was found that the form of that visible world which was being called satya, was perishable; and that there was at its core, some other imperishable, that is, amṛta substance. As it became more and more necessary to define clearly this difference between the two, the two words 'avidyā' and 'vidyā' came to be used in place of the words 'satya' and 'amṛta', and ultimately, the terminology 'māyā' and 'satya' or 'mithyā' and 'satya' came into vogue; because, as the root meaning of the word 'satya' is, 'eternally lasting', people began latterly to consider it improper to refer to perishable and ever-changing Names and Forms as 'satya'. But, though the words 'māyā' or 'mithyā' may have thus come into vogue subsequently, yet, the ideas that the appearance of worldly objects which is visible to one's eyes is perishable and asatya, and that the 'Elementary Substance' which underlies it, is alone sat or satya, have been in vogue from ancient times; and even in the Ṛg-veda, it is stated that: "ekaṁ sad viprā BAHUDHĀ vadanti" (1.164.46 and 10.114.5) – "that which is fundamentally one and permanent (sat), is given different NAMES by the viprāḥ (scients)" – that is to say, one and the same Real and eternal thing appears in different appearances as a result of Names and Forms. The word 'māyā' has also been used in the Ṛg-veda to mean "making one form

to appear as numerous"; and there is a statement in it that "indro mājābhiḥ pururūpaḥ īyate", that is, "Indra takes up various shapes by his Mājā" (Ṛg. 6.47.18). The word 'mājā' has been once used in the Taittirīya Saṁhitā in the same sense (Tai. Saṁ. 1.11), and ultimately in the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad, the word 'mājā' has been applied to Names and Forms. But although the practice of applying the word 'mājā' to Names and Forms first came into vogue at the date of the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad, yet, the idea that Names and Forms are non-permanent (anitya), and unreal (asatya), is prior

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in point of time; and it is clearly not an idea, which has been invented by Śaṅkarācārya by perverting the meaning of the word 'mājā'. Those who have not got the moral courage to fearlessly call the appearance of the Name-d and Form-ed universe 'mithyā' as has been done by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, or those who are even afraid to use the word 'mājā' in the same sense, as has been done by the Blessed Lord in the Bhagavadgītā, may, if they wish, use the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad terminology of 'satya' and 'amṛta' without any objection. Whatever may be said, the proposition that a distinction was made between Names and Forms as 'vināśī' (perishable) and the Fundamental Substance underlying them as 'amṛta' or 'avināśī' (imperishable), even in the times of the ancient Vedas, does not thereby suffer,

The province of Adhyātma (the philosophy of the Absolute Self) does not end after deciding that in order that the Ātman should acquire the Knowledge, which it acquires, of the various Name-d and Form-ed objects in the external world, there must be, in the external world, at the root of these various objects, some 'something' in the shape of a fundamental and permanent substance, which is the foundation or counterpart of such Knowledge, and that otherwise it is impossible to acquire that Knowledge. Vedāntins call this Permanent Substance, which is at the root of the external world, 'Brahman'; and, it is necessary to determine the form of this Brahman, if it is possible to do so. As this Eternal Substance, which is at the root of all Name-d and Form-ed things is imperceptible, its form can clearly not be perceptible, or sthūla (gross), like the form of objects embodied in Name and Form. But if you omit objects which are perceptible and gross, yet, there are numerous other objects which are imperceptible, such as, the Mind, Memory, Desire, Life, Knowledge etc.; and it is not impossible that the Parabrahman is of the form of any one of them. Some say that the Parabrahman is of the same form as Prāṇa (Vital Force). The German philosopher Schopenhauer has come to the decision that the Parabrahman is the embodiment of Desire. As Desire is a faculty of the Mind, the Brahman may, according to this opinion, be said to be made up of Mind (Tai. 3.4). But, from what has been stated so far,

one may say that: 'prajñānam brahma' (Ai. 3.3), or "vijñānam brahma" (Tai. 3.5), i.e., "Brahman is the knowledge acquired by us of the diversity in the gross material world". Haegel's , doctrine is of that kind. But in the Upaniṣads, the form of the Brahman has been made to include sat, that is, the common quality of Existence possessed by all things in the world (or their 'sattāsāmānyatva') as also ānanda (Joy), along with Knowledge in the form of Consciousness (i.e., cidrūpī jñāna); and the Brahman is said to be 'saccidānanda' in form. Another form of the Brahman is the OM-kāra. The explanation of this form is as follows:-All the eternal Vedas first came out of the OM-kāra; and in as much as Brahmadeva created the entire universe from the eternal words in the Vedas, after the. Vedas had come into existence (Gī. 17.23; and Ma. Bhā, Śān. 231.56-58), it is clear that there was nothing in the beginning except the OM-kāra, and, therefore, the OM-kāra is the true form of the Brahman (Māṇḍūkya. 1; Taitti. 1.8). But, if you consider the matter from the purely Metaphysical. point; of view, all these forms of the Parabrahman possess more or less the character of Name and Form; because, all these forms are perceptible to human organs, and all that men come to know in this way, falls into the category of Names and Forms. Then, how is one going to determine the true form of that eternal, all-pervasive, homogeneous, permanent, and immortal Element (Gī. 13.12 –

17), which is the foundation of these Names and Forms? Some Metaphysicians say that this Element must forever remain uncongnisable by our organs; and Kant has even given up the further consideration of this subject-matter. In the Upaniṣads also, the uncognisable form of the Parabrahman has been described by saying "neti, neti"-that is. It is not something about which something can be told– the Brahman is beyond that; It is not visible to the eyes; and "yato vāco nivartante aprāpya manasā saha", that is, "It is beyond speech and also beyond the Mind". Nevertheless, the philosophy of the Absolute Self has come to the conclusion that even in this difficult position, man can, by his Reason, determine the nature of the form of Brahman. We must first find out which one is the most superior and comprehensive of the various imperceptible things mentioned above, namely, Desire, Memory

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Determination, Hope, Life, Knowledge etc., and look upon the highest of them all as the form of the Parabrahman; because, it is an indisputable fact that the Parabrahman is- the highest of all imperceptible substances. When one considers Desire, Memory, Hope, Determination etc. from this point of view, one sees, as has been shown in the chapter on the Body and the Ātman, that these are all natural faculties of the Mind; that the Mind is, therefore, higher than them all; that knowledge is

higher than the Mind; that Reason is higher than Knowledge, as Knowledge is only an inherent faculty of Reason; and that ultimately that Ātman of which the Reason is a servant, is the highest of all (Gī. 3.42). If the Ātman is higher than Desire, the Mind and the other imperceptible substances, it naturally follows, that the Ātman must be the form of the Parabrahman. The same argument has been adopted in the seventh chapter of the Chāndogyopaniṣad, and Sanatkumāra has said to Nārada, that the Mind is higher (bhūyas) than speech, Knowledge is higher than the Mind, and Strength (bala) is higher than Knowledge; and in as much as, going up in this way, the Ātman is the highest of all (bhūman), the Ātman must be the true form of the Parabrahman. From among English writers, Green has accepted this doctrine; but as his arguments are slightly different in nature, I will concisely mention them here in Vedantic terminology. Green says that there must be some substance uniformly underlying the various Names and Forms in the external universe, which (substance) is the counterpart of the Knowledge created by the Ātman by synthesising the various impressions of Names and Forms made on the Mind through the organs; otherwise, the Knowledge resulting from the synthesis made by the Ātman will be self-conceived and without foundation, and will fall flat like the Vijñāna-vāda. We call this 'Something', Brahman; but Green accepts the terminology of Kant, and calls it the Thing-in-itself (vastu-tattva): this is the only difference between us and Green. In any case, the vastu-tattva (Brahman)

and the Ātman remain ultimately the only two correlative things. Out of these,, although the Ātman cannot be grasped by the Mind or by Reason, that is to say, although it is beyond the reach of the

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organs, yet, taking as correct one's self -experience, we come to the conclusion that the Ātman is not Gross, but is Thought-formed (cidrūpī), or of the form of Consciousness (caitanya-rūpī). Having in this way determined the form of the Ātman, we have next to determine the form of the Brahman. That Brahman or vastu-tattva is either (1) of the same form as the Ātman or (2) is different in form from the Ātman; these two things alone are possible; because, there is no third thing which now remains except the Brahman and the Ātman. But, it is our experience that if any two objects are different in form, then their effects and products must also be different. Therefore, in any science, we determine whether two things are the same or different, by considering their effects. For instance, if the roots, rootlings, bark, leaves, flowers, fruits etc. of two trees are the same, we come to the conclusion that they are the same; and if they are different, we say that the trees are different. When the same argument is applied in the present case, we see that the Ātman and the Brahman must be uniform; because, as has been mentioned above, the synthesis of the impressions created on the Mind by the various objects

in the world, which (synthesis) results from the activity of the Ātman, must be the counterpart of the synthesis of all the objects in the world made by the Brahman or vastu-tattva (which is the Root of those objects) by breaking up their diversity; if not, all Knowledge will be without foundation and will fall flat. And, it now follows as a natural conclusion that though these two Elements, which arrive at two exactly similar syntheses may be in two different places, they cannot be different from each other; and that, the form of the Brahman must be the same as the form of the Ātman. [1] In short, from whichever point of view one considers the matter, it now follows that not only is the Brahman-Element underlying the Names and Forms in the external world, not gross like Matter embodied in Names and Forms, but also the various forms of the Brahman, which are embodiments respectively of Desire, Mind, Knowledge, Life, Vital Force, or the logos OM-kāra, are forms of a lower order, and the true form of the Brahman is beyond all of them and superior to

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all of them, that is to say, is of the form of the pure Ātman. And it also follows from what has been stated in various places in the Gītā on this subject, that the doctrine of the Gītā is the same (Gī. 2.20; 7.7; 8. 4; 13.31; 15.7, 8). But, it must not be

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[1] Green's Prolegomena to Ethics, §§26 to 36.



thought that this doctrine of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman was found out by our Ṛṣis merely by some such logic; because, as has been stated in the beginning of this chapter, no proposition can be definitely laid down in the philosophy of the Absolute Self by means of Reason alone and it must always be supported by self-experience. We also see even in the Material sciences, that we first get an experience and later on come to know or find out the reasons for it. For the same reason, hundreds of years before the rational explanation for the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman was found out, our ancient Ṛṣis had first come to the conclusion that: "neha nānā 'sti kiṃcana" (Br. 4.4.19; Kaṭha. 4.11), i.e., "the diversity which is visible in this world is not real", and that there is at the bottom of that diversity an Element which is one in all directions, immortal, imperishable, and permanent (Gī. 18.20); and had, by introspection, arrived at the ultimate conclusion that the Imperishable Element clothed in Names and forms in the external world and the Ātman-element to be found in our bodies, which is beyond Reason, are one and the same, that is, they are both homogeneous, immortal, and inexhaustible; or that whatever element is in the Cosmos (brahmāṇḍa) also resides in the human body (piṇḍa); and in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad, Yājñavalkya says to Maitreyī, to Gārgī, Vāruṇi and others, and to Janaka that this is the mystic import of Vedānta (Br. 3.5 – 8, 4.24). It has been stated earlier in the same Upaniṣad, that he who has understood that "ahaṃ brahmāsmi", i.e., "I am the

Parabrahman", has understood everything (Br. 1.4.10); and in the sixth chapter of the Chāndogyopaniṣad, the father of Śvetaketu has explained to him this elementary principle of the Monistic (advaita) Vedānta in various ways. In the beginning of the chapter Śvetaketu said to his father:— "In the same way as one knows all the Name-d and Form-ed transformations of mud when he once knows what there is in a ball of mud. tell me that one thing by knowledge of which I will come to know

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about all things; because, I do not know that one thing". His father then explained to him by nine different illustrations, namely, of rivers, the sea, water, salt, etc. that: "that Element (tat) which is at the root of the visible world and thou (tvam), that is to say, the Ātman in thy body, are one and the same thing; that is, "tat tvam asi"; and when thou hast understood what thy Ātman is, thou wilt of thy own accord understand what is at the root of the Cosmos"; and every time, the canon "tat tvam asi" – "thou art that" – is repeated (Chan. 6. 8 – 16). "tat tvam asi" is one of the important canons of Monistic Vedānta, and that is translated into Marathi by "jem piṇḍīm teṁ brahmāṇḍīm", i.e., "that which is in the Body, is also in the Cosmos".

We have, in this way, proved that the Brahman is the same in form as the Ātman. But, some are likely to think that because the Ātman is believed to be of the form of Consciousness (cidrūpī), the Brahman is also of that form (i.e., cidrūpī). It is, therefore, necessary to give here some further explanation of the true nature of the Brahman, and at the same time of the true nature of the Ātman. cit or jñāna (Knowledge) is a quality acquired by Reason— which is gross in nature – by contact with the Ātman; but, in as much as it is not proper to arrogate this quality of Reason to the Ātman, one must, from the philosophical point of view, look upon the fundamental form of the Ātman as qualityless and unknowable. Therefore, though the Brahman of the same nature as the Ātman, it is, according to some, to some extent improper to say that both or either of these is of the same nature as cit (Consciousness or Knowledge). It is not that their objection extends only to the Brahman and Ātman being conscious in form; but, it naturally follows, that it is also not proper according to them to apply the adjective sat (Real) to the Parabrahman; because, sat and asat (Reality and Illusion) are two qualities, which are contrary to each other, and always mutually dependent, and which are usually mentioned with reference to two different things. He who has never seen light, can never get an idea of darkness; and what is more, he cannot even imagine the couple (dvam̐dva) of light and darkness. The same argument applies to the couple of

sat and asat (Real and Illusory). It is quite clear that when, we notice that some objects are destroyed, we begin to divide all things into two classes of asat (perishable) and sat (non-perishable); or, in other words, in order that the human mind should conceive the two ideas of sat and asat, it is necessary that these two opposite qualities should come before the human eyes. But, if there was only one substance in the beginning, how can one apply to this Fundamental Substance the two mutually dependent words sat and asat, which came into- existence by being applied to two different substances after duality had first come into existence? Because, if you call that fundamental substance, sat, then the question arises – whether at that time (that is, before duality had come into existence) there was in existence something else by the side of it. Therefore, in the Nāsadīya-Sūkta of the Ṛg-Veda, no adjective is applied to the Parabrahman and the Fundamental Element of the universe is described by saying: "in the commencement of the world, there was neither sat nor asat, but whatever there was, was one", and that the couples of sat and asat came into existence afterwards (Ṛg. 10.129); and it is stated in the Gītā that he whose Reason has become free from the doubles of sat and asat, hot and cold, etc. reaches the nirdvaṁdva (beyond-doubles) sphere of the Brahman, which is beyond these doubles (Gī. 7.28; 2.45). From this it will be seen how difficult and subtle are the ideas in the philosophy of the

Absolute Self. If one considers the matter merely from the logical point of view, one is forced to admit this unknowability of the Parabrahman or of the Ātman. But although the Parabrahman may, in this way, be qualityless and unknowable, that is, beyond the reach of the organs, yet, as every man has a self-experience of his own Ātman, it is possible for us to get the self-experience that the indescribable form of this qualityless Ātman which we realise by means of a visionary experience (sākṣātkāra), is the same as of the Parabrahman; and therefore, the proposition that the- Brahman and the Ātman are uniform does not become meaning- less. Looking at the matter from this point of view, it is impossible to Bay more about the form of the Brahman than that: "the Brahman is the same in form as the Ātman": and

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one has to depend for all other things on one's own self-experience. But, in a scientific exposition which has to appeal to Reason, it is necessary to give as much explanation as is possible, by the use of words. Therefore, although the Brahman is all-pervasive, unknowable, and indescribable, yet, in order to express the difference between the Gross World and the Brahman-Element (which is the same in nature as the Ātman), the philosophy of the Absolute Self considers the quality of caitanya (Consciousness), which becomes visible to us in Gross Matter after its contact with the Ātman, as the pre-

eminent quality of the Ātman, and says that both the Ātman and the Parabrahman are cidrūpī or caitanya-rūpī (Conscious or Knowing, in form); because, if you do not do so, then, in as much as both the Ātman and the Brahman are qualityless, invisible, and indescribable, one has, in describing them either to sit quiet, or, if someone else gives some description of them by means of words, one has to say: "neti, neti | etasmād anyat param asti | ", i.e., "It is not this, this is not It (Brahman), (this is a Name and Form), the true Brahman is something else, which is quite beyond that", and in this way, do nothing else except restricting oneself to negatives (Br. 2.3.6). It is, therefore, that cit (Knowledge), sat ('sattāmātratva' or Existence) and ānanda (Joy) are commonly mentioned as the attributes of the Brahman. There is no doubt that these attributes are much higher than all other attributes; nevertheless, these attributes have been mentioned for the only purpose of acquainting one with the form of the Brahman, as far as it is possible to do so by words; and it must not be forgotten that the true form of the Brahman is qualityless, and that one has to get a self-experience (aparokṣānubhava) of it in order to understand it. I shall now concisely explain what our philosophers have said regarding the way in which this self-experience can be had, that is to say, in what way and when this indescribable form of the Brahman is experienced by the brahma-niṣṭha (the devotee of the Brahman).

The identification of the Brahman with the Ātman is described in Marathi by saying "what is in the piṇḍa (Body), is also in the brahmāṇḍa (Cosmos); and it logically follows that when once a man has experienced this identity of the

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Brahman and the Ātman, there can no more remain any difference between the jñātā or observing Ātman, and the jñeya or the subject-matter to be seen. But, a doubt is likely to arise that if a man does not escape from his eyes and other organs, so long as he is alive, how can one get over the fact that these organs are different from the objects which are perceptible to the organs?; and, if one does not get rid of this difference, how is one to realise the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman? And, if one considers the matter only from the point of view of the organs, these doubts do not at first sight seem improper. But, if you consider the matter deeply, it will be seen that the organs do not perform the function of seeing external objects of their own accord, "cakṣuḥ paśyati rupāṇi manasā m tu cakṣuṣā" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 311.17) – in order to see anything (and also in order to hear anything etc.), the eyes (as also the ears etc.) require the help of the Mind. It has been stated before that if the Mind is vacant, objects in front of the eyes are not seen. "When one takes into account this common experience, one sees that if the Mind is taken out of the organs, the dualities in the objects of the senses become non-

existent to us, though they might exist in the external world, notwithstanding that the organs of eyes etc. are perfectly in order; and it is easy to draw the inference that the Mind will in this way become steeped in the Ātman or in the Ātman-formed Brahman, and one will begin to get a visionary experience (sākṣātkāra) of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman. That man who has attained this mental state by meditation, mental isolation, worshipping in solitude, or by intense contemplation of the Brahman, will not perceive the dualities or differences in the visible world, although they may be before his eyes; and then he realises the form of the sole (advaita) Brahman of his own accord. In this beatific ultimate state, which is the result of the fullest Realisation of the Brahman, the three-fold difference, that is, tripūtī of Knower, Knowable, and Knowledge, or the dual difference of worshipper and worshipped ceases to exist. Therefore, this state of the mind cannot be described by one person to another person; because, it is dear that immediately on uttering the word 'another', this state of mind is destroyed, and the man returns

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from the advaita (non-dual) into the dvaita (dual). Nay, it is even difficult for anybody to say that he himself has experienced this state of mind! Because, as soon as you utter the word 'I', there arises in the mind the idea of a difference



from others, and such an idea is obstructive to the realisation of the identity between this Brahman and the Ātman. It is for this reason that Yājñavalkya has described this state of beatitude in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka as follows:— "yatra hi dvaitam iva bhavati tad itara itaraṁ paśyati ... .. jighrati ... .. śṛṇoti ... .. vijānāti | yatra tvasya sarvam ātmaivābhūt tat kena kam paśyet ... .. jighret ... .. śṛṇuyāt vijānīyāt | ... vijñātāram are kena vijānīyāt | etāvad are khalu amṛtatvam iti | " i.e., "so long as the duality of the Observer and the observed existed, the one was seeing the other, smelling the other, hearing the other, and knowing the other; but when everything assumes the form of the Ātman, (that is, when there no more remains the difference between oneself and another), then, who is to see, smell, hear or know whom? man I how can there be another one to know him who is himself the Knower? " (Bṛ. 4.5.15; 4,3.27). When everybody is in this way merged in the Ātman or in the Brahman, or becomes ātmabhūta or brahmabhūta, the doubles of pain and happiness, or fear, lamentation etc. cease to exist (Īśā. 7); because, in order that one should feel fear, or lament, the one to be feared or lamented must be different from oneself, and there is no room for a difference of this kind, when one has realised the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman. This state of being free from pain, lamentation etc. is called the 'ānandamaya' state (the beatific state); and, it is stated in the Taittirīya Upaniṣad, that this ānanda (joy or beatitude) is Brahman (Tai. 2.8; 3.6). But,

even this description is not perfect; because, where does the experiencer of this beatitude now remain anymore? It is, therefore, stated in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad that Self-beatitude (ātmānanda) is something by far stranger than ordinary joy (Bṛ. 4.3.32). Having regard to this insufficiency of the word 'ānanda' (beatitude), which occurs in the description of the Brahman, the person who has realised the Brahman (brahma-vettā) is, in some other places, described only as "brahma bhavati ya evaṁ veda" (Bṛ. 4.4.25) or "brahma veda

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brahmaiva bhavati" (Muṇ. 3. 2. 9) "he, who has realised the Brahman, has become the Brahman", that is to say, omitting the word 'ānanda', from the description. In the same way as, after a lump of salt has been dissolved in water, the difference that one part of the water is saltish and another of it is not saltish does not remain, so also, once a man has realised the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, everything becomes merged in the Brahman. This beatific condition of the mind has been described in the Upaniṣads as above (Bṛ. 2.4. 2; Chān. 6.13). But that saint Tukārāma about whom was said "jāyacī vade nitya vedānta vāṇī" , (i.e., " one whose voice always uttered Vedānta") has described his self-experience in the following words by taking the sweet illustration of jaggery instead of this other saltish illustration:—

As jaggery is sweet; so has God come to be every where  
||

Now whom shall I worship; God is inside as also outside  
|| (Tu. Gā. 3637).

This is what is meant by saying, that though the Parabrahman is imperceptible to the organs and unrealisable by the mind, yet it is 'svānubhavagamyā', that is, it can be realised by every man by his self-experience. The unknowability of the Parabrahman which is spoken of, belongs to the stage in which there is a Knower and a To-Be-Known; it does not belong to the phase of the Realisation of Non-dualism. So long as one has the feeling that he is something different from the world, it is not possible for a man, whatever he may do, to fully realise the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman. But, although a river cannot swallow the sea, yet, it can fall into the sea and become merged into it; so also, may a man dive into the Parabrahman and realise it; and then he reaches the Brahmi-ised (brahmamaya) state of "sarvabhūtastham ātmānaṁ sarvabhūtāni cātmani" (Gī. 6.29), i.e., "all created beings are within himself, and he is within all created things." In order to explain that the full Realisation of the Brahman depends on one's own self-experience, the form of the Parabrahman has been skilfully and paradoxically described as follows:  
"avijñātāṁ vijānatām

vijñānam avijānatām" (Kena. 2.3), " those who say that they have Realised the Parabrahman have not really Realised It; they alone have Realised It, who do not Realise that they have Realised It"; because, when a person says that he has Realised the Parabrahman, there is clearly in his mind the dual feeling that he (the Jñātā) is something different from the Brahman (the Jñeya) which he has known, and, therefore, his non-dual Realisation of the identity of the Atman .and the Brahman is, at this stage, to that extent, upripe or incomplete. Therefore, one who says this, admits by his own mouth that he has not really Realised the Brahman. On the other hand, when the dual feeling of T and 'Brahman' has disappeared, and the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman has been fully Realised, the words "I have understood That" (that is, necessarily, something which is different from me) cannot be used. Therefore, when a man is in this condition, that is to say, when the Realiser (jñānī) is unable to say that he has Realised the Brahman, he may be said to have Realised the Brahman. That a Realiser should be thus totally merged, engrossed, totally dissolved, saturated or dead into the Parabrahman, as a result of a total annihilation of the feeling -of duality, would commonly be looked upon as difficult. But our philosophers have after personal experience come to the conclusion that this state of 'nirvāṇa'(dissolution), which at first sight appears difficult, can ultimately be reached by a man by practice (abhyāsa) and by renunciation (vairāgya). Some people raise an objection that in as much as the dual

feeling of egoism is destroyed or dies in this state of mind, this is a kind of self-destruction. But anyone can see that this objection is without foundation, when one realises that though a man cannot describe this state when he is experiencing it, yet, he can afterwards remember it. [1] But even a

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stronger illustration than that is the experience of saints. Leave aside the self-experiences of ancient siddha (released) souls. Even in modern times, Tukārāma, that highest among the devotees of the Blessed Lord, has said:—

I saw my death by my own eyes; that spectacle was  
incomparable | (Gā. 3579).

in describing this state of ultimate bliss in figurative language, and with great exuberation and appreciation. By the worship of, and meditation on, the qualityful perceptible or imperceptible Brahman, the devotee gradually rises and

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[1] This feeling of non-duality or of non-differentiation which results from meditation and concentration is also experienced by smelling a chemical gas called nitrous-oxide. This gas is known as 'laughing gas' (See Will to Believe and Other Essays on Popular Philosophy by William James, pp. 234 – 298). But the great difference between the two is, that this state is artificial, whereas the state attained by self-absorption (samādhi) is true and natural. But, I have mentioned this here, because the existence of a state of non-dual feeling (abheda-bhāva) can be proved by the evidence. of this artificial state of mind.

ultimately reaches such a state that he Realises the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, which is described by the words "aham brahmāsmi" (Br. 1.4.10), i.e., "I am the Brahman"; and then he becomes steeped to such an extent in that state, that he does not think of what state he is in, or of what he is experiencing. In as much as he has not ceased to be awake, this his state cannot be called the dream-state or the sleeping-state; and, it cannot be called a waking-state, as all the activities based on duality, which are carried on in the waking-state, are stopped. Therefore, this state is referred to as the 'turīya' (fourth) state, which is different from the ordinary dreaming (svapna), sleeping (suṣupti) or waking (jāgrti) states; and as the 'nirvikalpa' (i.e., in which there is not the slightest feeling of duality) form of meditation has been prescribed by the Pātañjala Yoga as the principal means for reaching this state, it is stated in the Gītā that one should spare no pains for acquiring by practice this 'nirvikalpa-samādhi-yoga' (Gī. 6.20 – 23). This feeling of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman is the most complete state of Knowledge; because, when the world becomes Brahmified (brahmarūpa), that is, One in form, one has reached the climax of the process of knowledge which is described in the Gītā by the words "avibhaktaṁ vibhakteṣu" – unifying that which is diverse – and it is not possible to get

any further knowledge about anything. In the same way, when one has experienced this immortal Element which is beyond Name and Form, one automatically escapes the cycle of birth and death, since birth and death is included in the category of Name and Form, and such a man has gone beyond Name and Form (Gī. 8.21). Therefore, Tukārāma has referred to this state as "the death of death" (Ga. 3580); and Yājñavalkya has, for the same reason, referred to this state as the limit or climax of immortality. This is indeed the 'state of being released from birth' (jīvan-muktāvasthā). It is stated in the Pātañjala Yoga-Sūtras, and also in other books, that in this state of mind, a man acquires superhuman powers like levitation etc.

(Pātañjala Sū. 3. 16 – 55); and, it is on this account that some persons take to Yoga practices. But, as has been stated by the author of the Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha, the power of levitation etc. is neither an ideal, nor any part of the state of a Brahman-engrossed (brahma-niṣṭha), and the man who is a Birth-released (jīvanmukta) makes no attempt to acquire these powers, which very often are not to be seen in him (Yo. 5.89). Therefore, not only are these powers not referred to in the Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha, but one does not come across them anywhere even in the Gītā. Vaśiṣṭha has clearly said to Rāma, that these wonderful powers are only tricks of Māyā, and are not the science of the Brahman. They may be true; I do not insist that they cannot be true, but in any case, they undoubtedly do not form part of the brahma-vidyā (science of the Brahman).

Therefore, the Brahma-Vidyā science says that whether these

powers are acquired or not, a man should pay no attention to them, nor entertain any hope or desire about them, but should exert himself only in such efforts as will be sufficient to enable him to reach the ultimate beatific Brahmic state, in which he feels that there is only one Ātman in all created beings. Realisation of the Brahman is the purest state of Ātman; it is neither magic nor Māyic wonders; and therefore, not only is the worth of the science of the Brahman not increased by such wonders, but they cannot be any proof of the worth of that science. Birds, or in these days even aeronauts, fly in the sky; but, on that account no one considers them as knowers of the Brahman. Nay, people, who have acquired the powers of

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levitation may like Aghoraghaṇṭa in the Mālātī-Mādhava, be cruel and treacherous persons.

The indescribable experience of the beatitude of realising the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman cannot be fully related by one person to another; because, in doing so, one has to use the Dualistic phraseology of 'I' and 'You', and one's entire experience of non-duality cannot be described in this Dualistic phraseology. Therefore, the descriptions of this ultimate state which are to be found in the Upaniṣads must also be considered incomplete or unimportant; and if these



descriptions are unimportant, then the purely Dualistic descriptions, which are found given in the Upaniṣads for explaining the creation or the formation of the universe, must also be considered unimportant. For instance, the descriptions of the creation of the visible universe to be found in the Upaniṣads, that the qualityful Puruṣa, named Hiraṇyagarbha, or the various perceptible objects in the world like āpa (water) etc. gradually came into existence out of the pure, permanent, all-pervading and immutable Ātman-formed Brahman; or that the Parameśvara first created these Names and Forms, and then entered them (Tai. 2.6; Chān. 6.7.3; Bṛ. 1.4.7) etc., cannot be correct from the point of view of Non-Dualism; because, if the qualityless Parameśvara, realisable only by Knowledge, pervades everything, it is scientifically without foundation to say that one created the other. But, as the Dualistic phraseology is the only possible medium for explaining the formation of the universe to ordinary persons, the above-mentioned descriptions of the perceptible universe, or of Names and Forms, have been given in the Upaniṣads. Nevertheless, even in these descriptions the substratum of Non-Dualism is, in many places, kept intact, and it is made quite clear that though the Dualistic phraseology has been used in the descriptions, Non-Dualism is the true doctrine. Just as, though we now definitely know that it is not the Sun which revolves, we still speak of the rising or the setting of the Sun, so also, although it was definitely known that one and only one Parabrahman, in the form of the Ātman, pervades everything

in all directions and without division, and that It is immutable, yet, we come

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across expressions like "the perceptible universe was created out of the Parabrahman" in the Upaniṣads; and in the same way, also in the Gītā, although the Blessed Lord has said:— "My true form is imperishable and unborn" (Gī. 7.25), yet, He at the same time says, "I create the whole world" (Gī. 4.6). But some scholars, neglecting the meaning underlying these descriptions, and looking upon them as literally true and important, lay down the proposition that the Upaniṣads support the Dvaita (Dualistic) or Viśiṣṭādvaita (Qualified Monistic) theory. They say that if one believes that there is only one qualityless Brahman which pervades everything, one cannot explain how the mutable, perishable, and qualityful objects came into existence out of this immutable Brahman; because, although one may describe the Name-d and Form-ed universe as 'Māyā', yet, in as much as it is logically impossible for the qualityful Māyā to come into existence out of the qualityless Brahman, the theory of Non-Dualism falls to the ground. Rather than that, it would be more proper (i) to accept as eternal a qualityful but perceptible form of the Name-d and Form-ed perceptible universe like Prakṛti, as is done in Sāṃkhya philosophy, and (ii) to imagine that at the innermost core of this Prakṛti, there is another permanent element in the

shape of the Parabrahman (Br. 3.7), just as there is steam in an iron engine, and (iii) to believe that these two Elements form a Unity like the grains in a pomegranate. But, in my opinion, it is not proper to ascribe this meaning to the Upaniṣads. It is true that the Upaniṣads contain descriptions which are sometimes Dualistic, and at other times purely Non-Dualistic, and that we have to reconcile them with each other. But, we cannot reconcile the various statements in the Upaniṣads with each other by accepting the Dualistic point of view, as satisfactorily as can be done by accepting the Non-dualistic point of view, and saying that when the qualityless Brahman is taking up a qualityful form an illusory Dualistic state seems, only to that extent, to have come into existence. For instance, the words in the phrase 'tat tvam asi' can never be satisfactorily explained from the Dualistic point of view. It is not that Dualists did not realise this difficulty. But these Dualists have analysed that

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phrase by saying that 'tat tvam' means 'tasya tvam', that is, "Thou art OR That, which is something different from thee; thou art not That Itself"; and they have, in this way, somehow or other explained away this very important canon, and satisfied themselves. But those persons who understand even a little of Sanskrit, and whose minds are not perverted as a result of obstinacy, will at once see that this forced meaning is not correct. In the Kaivalyopaniṣad (Kai. 1.16), the terms 'tat'

and 'tvam' have been interchanged by analysing the phrase 'tat tvam asi' as "sa tvameva tvameva tat" (i.e., "It is thou, thou art It"), and this canon has been proved to be in support of Non-Dualism. What more shall I say? Unless one excises away the major portion of the Upaniṣads, or intentionally closes one's eyes to them, it is impossible to show that there is any other import in the Upaniṣad science except a Non-Dualistic import. But, as these arguments are endless, I shall not further discuss the matter here. Those, who are in favour of any opinion other than the Non-Dualistic theory, are perfectly welcome to accept it. I do not think that anything except a Non-Dualistic import could have been intended to be conveyed by those noble souls, who, after describing their self-experience in unmistakable terms by saying: "neha nānā 'sti kiṁcana" (Br̥. 4.4.19; Kaṭha. 4.11), i.e., "there is no diversity of any kind in this world", and that whatever there is, is fundamentally "ekamevādvitīyam" (Chān. 6.3.2), i.e., "one only, without a second", have gone further and said:— "mṛtyoḥ sa mṛtyum āpnoti ya iha nāneva paśyati", that is, "he who sees diversity in this world, falls into the cycle of birth and death". But, though there is room for doubt whether all the Upaniṣads convey one and the same import, since there are different Upaniṣads of the different branches of the Vedas, one does not experience the same difficulty in the case of the Gītā. As the Gītā is a single work, it is clear that it expounds one kind of Vedānta; and, when one considers what that Vedānta is, one has to interpret the Gītā as expounding the Non-Dualistic

doctrine that the only Reality is "That which remains over after all created things are destroyed" (Gī. 8.20), and Which pervades on all sides all the material bodies (piṇḍa) as It pervades the

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Cosmos (brahmāṇḍa), (Gī. 13.31). Nay, the principle of identifying everything with oneself (ātmaupamya), which has been mentioned in the Gītā, cannot be fully explained by any aspect of Vedānta other than a Non-Dualistic aspect. I do not mean to suggest that all the various philosophical speculations or doctrines, which were expounded at the time of Śrī Śāṅkarācārya, or after him, in support of the Non- Dualistic theory, have been accepted m toto in the Gītā. The Gītā was in existence before the Dualistic, Non-Dualistic and the Qualified-Monistic doctrines had been formulated; and I also accept the position that the Gītā cannot, on that account, contain any doctrinal arguments belonging to any particular sect. But this does not prevent one from saying that the Vedānta expounded in the Gītā is generally of the Non- Dualistic kind supported by the Śāṅkara School (the school of Śrī Śāṅkarācārya), and not Dualistic. But, although, from the point of view of philosophy, there is some common ground between the Gītā and the Śāṅkara school, yet, from the point of view of mode of life, the Gītā gives higher importance to the doctrine of Action (Karma-Yoga) than to the doctrine of Renunciation of Action

(Karma-Saṁnyāsa) which is supported by Śaṁkarācārya. But, this subject-matter will be considered later on. What I am dealing with at present is the question of philosophy, and all that I have to say here is that this philosophy is of the same kind in the Gītā as in the Śāṁkara school, that is, it is Non-Dualistic; and that is the reason why the Śāṁkarabhāṣya on the Gītā is considered more valuable than the other doctrinal commentaries.

When one has thus come to the conclusion that there remains behind only one immutable and qualityless Element .after all Names and Forms are eliminated, from the point of view of Knowledge, and that one has, on that account, to accept Non-Dualism after full and minute consideration, it becomes necessary to explain how the variegated perceptible qualityful universe came into existence out of one qualityless and imperceptible Element, from the point of view of Non-Dualistic Vedānta. It has been stated before that the Sāṁkhya have got over this difficulty by looking upon Matter with its three constituents (that is, qualityful Matter) as eternal

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and independent, in the same way, as the qualityless Spirit. But, if in this way one looks upon qualityful Matter as independent, the fundamental Elements of the world become

two, and the theory of Non-Dualism, which has been unconditionally accepted as correct for the various reasons mentioned above, comes into question; and if one does not look upon qualityful Matter as independent, it becomes impossible to explain how the variegated qualityful universe came into existence out of one fundamental qualityless substance; because, the theory that it is not possible for the Qualityful to come into existence out of the Qualityless, that is to say, for something to come into existence out of something which does not exist – according to satkāryavāda [1] – has also been accepted by Non-Dualists. In short, there is a difficulty on either hand. Then, how are we to get over this dilemma? One must find out some way for explaining how the Qualityful came into existence out of the Qualityless without giving the go-bye to Non-Dualism, and that way seems to be closed to us by the theory of satkāryavāda. True, the position is a difficult one. Nay; according to some, this is the principal difficulty in the way of accepting Non-Dualism, and, on that account, they accept Dualism. But the Non-Dualists have, by their intelligence, found out a skilful and unquestionable way for getting over this difficult position. They say that the theory of satkāryavāda or of the guṇa-pariṇāma-vāda [2] applies only when the cause and the product are both of the same kind or class; and on that account, even Non-Dualists will accept that the Real and Qualityless Brahman cannot give birth to a Real

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[1] See p. 210 above. ~Translator.

[2] See p. 234 above. ~Translator.

and Qualityful Māyā; but, this admission is effective only when both the substances are Real (satya). Where one substance is Real, and the other one is only a reflection of it, satkāryavāda does not apply. The Sāṃkhyas consider Prakṛti as an independent Real substance, in the same way as the Puruṣa. Therefore, they cannot, having regard to the theory of satkāryavāda, account for the outcome of a qualityful Prakṛti from a qualityless Puruṣa. But as the Non-Dualistic Vedānta holds that though

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Māyā may be eternal, it is neither Real nor independent, but is, as stated in the Gītā, a 'folly' (moha), an 'ignorance' ('ajñāna), or an 'illusion (māyā) seen by the organs', the objection based on satkāryavāda, does not in the least affect the Non-Dualistic doctrine. If a son is born to a father, we can say that he is the result of the guṇa-pariṇāma of the father; but when there is only one individual, namely, the father, and he is seen appearing sometimes in the guise of an infant, and sometimes of a young man, and sometimes of an old man, there does not exist, as we readily realise, the relation of cause and product, or of guṇa-pariṇāma between the man and his various disguises. In the same way, when we have come to the conclusion that there is only one Sun, we say that the reflection of that Sun seen in water is a kind of illusion, and that there is not another Sun which has come into existence by



guṇapariṇāma; and astronomy tells us that when once the true form of a planet has been defined by means of a telescope, that form of it which we see by the naked eyes, is only an appearance resulting from the weakness of our eyes and the immense distance of the planet from us. From this, it becomes clear that a particular thing cannot be looked upon as an independent, real, and existing thing, merely on account of the fact that it is actually perceptible to our eyes and other organs. Then, why should we not make use of the same argument in the philosophy of the Absolute Self, and say that the qualityless Parabrahman which has been defined by the telescope of the knowledgeable (spiritual) eyes is the only thing which is Real, and that the Names and Forms, which are visible to the knowledgeless natural eyes, is not the product or result of, or something which has come out of, this Parabrahman, but is purely a deceptive and illusory appearance due to the incapacity of our organs? The objection that the Qualityful cannot come into existence out of the Qualityless can itself not be made here; because, the two substances do not belong to the same category, and whereas the one is Real, the other is merely an appearance; and it is common experience, that, though there may be fundamentally one Real substance, the appearances of that same substance change according to the faulty vision, or the ignorance, or the

blindness of the person who sees. Take, for instance, the two qualities, namely, the words which can be heard by the ears, or the colours which can be seen by the eyes. Natural sciences have by minutely analysing the word or sound, which can be heard by the ears, clearly proved that 'sound' is nothing but waves or vibrations of the air. In the same way, it has now been determined by minute researches that the red, yellow, blue and other colours, which are visible to the eyes, are the evolutes of one fundamental sunlight, and that this sunlight itself is a kind of motion or vibration. If, although 'motion' or vibration is fundamentally one, the ears recognise it as 'sound' and the eyes as 'colour', then, the same argument being applied in a more comprehensive way to all the various organs, it follows that (i) the different human senses attribute (i.e., make an adhyāropa of) the different qualities of sound, colour, etc., which (qualities) are embodied in Name and Form, to one and the same Fundamental Substance, and thereby various appearances come into being; that (ii) it is not necessary for these appearances, qualities, or Names and Forms to exist in the Fundamental Substance; and that (iii) the coming into existence of all Names and Forms can thus be logically explained without the help of the doctrine of satkāryavāda. And in order to establish this proposition, Vedānta philosophy gives the various illustrations of a string being taken for a serpent, or a shell being taken for silver, or one thing being seen as two things by poking the finger under the eyeball, or the same substance being seen to be of different colours by

the use of spectacles of different colours. It is true that a man will always perceive the various Names and Forms or qualities in the world, in as much as he can never get rid of his organs. But, this relative appearance of the world, which, is seen by the eyes of the organised human being, cannot be said to be the fundamental, that is, the non-relative and eternal form of the world. If human beings come to have fewer or more organs than they have at present, they may not see the universe in the same way as they now see it; and, if this is true, then, on being asked to explain the eternal and real nature of the Element which is at the root of the world,

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without reference to the organs of the person who sees, one has to answer by saying that the Fundamental Element is qualityless, and our seeing it as qualityful is the result of the nature of our organs, and not the quality of the Fundamental Substance. Such questions do not arise in the Material sciences, because, in those sciences only such things are to be examined as are perceptible to the organs. But, from the fact that a man or his organs come to an end, we cannot conclude that the Paramēśvara also comes to an end; nor can we conclude from the fact that a man sees Him as being of a particular kind, that His Real, non-relative form, which is uncircumscribed by Time, is what the man sees. Therefore, in that philosophy of the Absolute Self in which one has to

determine the fundamental form of the Reality which is at the root of the universe, one must give up the relative and dependent vision of the human organs, and one has ultimately to consider the matter purely by his spiritual vision, that is to say, as far as possible, by Reason only; and when that is done, all the qualities which are perceptible to the organs automatically drop off; and one sees that the real form of the Brahman is beyond the reach of the organs, that is, qualityless; and that that form is a super- excellent form. But who is going to describe that which is qualityless and how? Therefore, the Non-Dualist Vedānta has laid down the proposition that the ultimate, that is to say, the non-relative and eternal form of the Parabrahman is not only qualityless but indescribable, and that, man sees a qualityful appearance, in this qualityless form, by reason of his organs. But, here again a question arises as to how the organs have acquired the power of changing the Qualityless into the Qualityful. The reply of the Non-Dualist Vedānta to this is: as human knowledge stops at this stage, one has either to say that this must be called the ignorance of the organs, and that their seeing the appearance of the qualityful universe in the qualityless Parabrahman is due to that ignorance; or, one has to content oneself with drawing the definite inference that the visible universe (Prakṛti) is only a 'divine illusion' of the qualityless Parameśvara, since the organs themselves are part of the creation of the Parameśvara (Gī. 7.14).

My readers will understand from this the import of the statements in the Gītā (Gī. 7.14, 24, 25) that- though the a-prabuddha, that is, those who see merely by the physical organs, see the Parameśvara to be perceptible and qualityful, yet, His real and excellent form is quality less; and that Realising that form by spiritual vision is the climax of Knowledge. But though, in this way, one arrives at the conclusion that the Parameśvara is fundamentally qualityless,. and that the human organs see in Him the variegated appearance of the qualityful universe, yet, it becomes necessary to precisely explain in what meaning the word 'qualityless' has to be taken in this proposition. It is true that though our organs attribute the qualities of sound, colour etc., to vibrations of air, or mistake a shell for silver, the vibrations of air do not possess the quality of sound or colour, nor does the shell possess the quality of silver; but, from the fact that the Fundamental Substance does not contain the particular attributed qualities, one cannot draw the necessary conclusion that It will not possess other qualities. Because, as we actually see, though the shell does not possess the quality of silver, yet,. it possesses some qualities other than those of silver. This, therefore, gives rise to the following difficulty, namely, though one admits that the fundamental Brahman does not possess the qualities which are ascribed to it by one's organs as a 'result of one's ignorance, how can one be sure that the

Parabrahman does not possess other qualities; and if it possesses other qualities, how is it qualityless? But, if one considers the matter a little minutely, it will be seen that even assuming the fundamental Brahman to possess qualities other than those ascribed to it by the organs, how are we going to find them out? The qualities which a man perceives are perceived by him through the medium of his organs; and those qualities, which are not perceptible to the organs, cannot be known. In short, even if the Parabrahman possesses some qualities other than those which are ascribed to it by our organs, it is not possible for us to know them; and saying that the Para-brahman does possess qualities is illogical, if it is impossible for us to know those qualities. Therefore, Vedāntists understand the word 'guṇa' as meaning 'qualities which

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are knowable by human beings', and formulate the proposition that the Brahman is 'qualityless' in this sense. Non-dualistic Vedānta does not say that the fundamental Parabrahman cannot possess qualities or powers which are beyond the imagination of human beings, and no one, as a matter of fact, can say that. Nay, even the Vedāntists say that the ignorance of the organs or Māyā, which was mentioned above, must be an unimaginable power of that fundamental Parabrahman.

The three-constituted Māyā or Prakṛti is not some independent substance; but, what happens is that the human organs, as a result of ignorance, ascribe (make an adhyāropa of) a qualityful appearance to one homogeneous, and qualityless Brahman. This theory is known as 'VIVARTA-VĀDA'. The explanation given by the Non-Dualistic Vedāntists as to how the variegated qualityful universe first came to be seen if the qualityless Brahman was the only Fundamental Substance, is as follows: – The Kaṇāda Nyāya philosophy propounds the doctrine that innumerable atoms are the fundamental cause of the universe, and the followers of Nyāya philosophy consider these atoms to be Real. They have,, therefore, come to the conclusion, that the various objects in the world begin to come into existence when these innumerable atoms begin to coalesce. As according to this theory, the universe starts to come into existence when the union between the atoms commences to take place, it is called 'Ārambha-vāda' (the Theory of Commencement). But Sāṃkhya philosophy does not accept this Nyāya theory of innumerable atoms, and says that the Fundamental Root of the Gross world is one, homogeneous, real, and three-constituted Prakṛti; and they say that the perceptible world comes into existence as a result of the unfurling or pariṇāma of the constituents of this three-constituted Prakṛti. This doctrine is known as the 'Guṇa-pariṇāma-vāda' (Theory of the Development of Constituents), because, it maintains that the entire perceptible universe is

the result of the unfurling of the constituents of one fundamental qualityful Prakṛti. But both these theories are negated by the, Non-Dualistic Vedāntists. As atoms are innumerable, they cannot be the Boot of the world according to Non-Dualism; and the Dualistic theory, that though Prakṛti is one,

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it is different from Puruṣa and independent, is also inconsistent with Non-Dualism; but, when in this way, both these theories are negated, it becomes necessary to explain how the qualityful universe came into existence out of one qualityless Brahman; because, according to the satkāryavāda, the Qualityful cannot come into existence out of the Qualityless. To this, the reply of the Vedāntists is, that the doctrine of satkāryavāda applies only where both the Cause and the Product are Real substances; where the fundamental substance is one, and only its forms or appearances are changed, this theory does not apply; because, as is common experience, seeing various appearances of one and the same thing is not a quality of that thing, and these various appearances can come into existence as a result of the difference in the vision of the persons who see. [1] When this

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[1] To explain this meaning in English, we have to say: Appearances are the results of subjective condition, viz., the senses of the observer, and not



theory is applied to the qualityless Brahman and the qualityful universe, one has to say that the Brahman is qualityless, and that an appearance of qualityfulness comes into existence in it, as a result of the nature of the human organs. This is known as the 'Vivarta-vāda.' According to Vivarta-vāda, there is believed to be only one, fundamental, Real substance, and it is said that numerous, unreal or constantly changing Appearances are ascribed to it; and in the Guṇa-pariṇāma-vāda, two Real substances are taken for granted from the very commencement, and it is said that the Guṇas (constituents) of one of these two become unfurled, and that all other things in the universe which are possessed of various qualities come into existence in consequence. The impression of the existence of a serpent, where, as a matter of fact, there is only a string, is the Vivarta-vāda; and, fibres being formed into a rope, or curds out of milk, is the Guṇa-pariṇāma-vāda. Therefore, in the book called Vedāntasāra, these two theories are described and differentiated between in the following words:—

yas tāttviko 'nyathābhāvaḥ pariṇāma udīritaḥ |  
atāttviko 'nyathābhāvo vivartaḥ sa udīritaḥ || (Ve. Sā.  
21).

that is, "when from one fundamental substance, another substance of a different nature comes into existence essentially, that is, really, that is called (guṇa-) pariṇāma; but when-instead of this, the fundamental substance looks something different (atāttvika), it is said to be vivarta". The Ārambha- vāda is the theory of the Nyāya school, the Guṇa-pariṇāma-vāda is the theory of the Sāṃkhya school, and the Vivarta- vāda is the theory of the Non-Dualist Vedānta school. The- Non-Dualist Vedāntists do not look upon the two qualityful. substances, atoms and Prakṛti, as different from or independent of the qualityless Brahman; but by their doing so, the objection that the Qualityful cannot spring out of the Qualityless arises on account of satkārya-vāda; and in order to get rid of that objection, the Vivarta-vāda has come into existence. But, the conclusion drawn by some, that, on that account the- Vedāntists will not at any time or cannot accept the Guṇa-pariṇāma-vāda is wrong. The principal object of the Vivarta-vāda is to show that (i) the objection of the Sāṃkhyas, or of other Dualists against Non-Dualism, namely, that the qualityful' Prakṛti or Māyā cannot spring out of the qualityless Brahman, is not impossible to answer, and that (ii) it is possible for our organs to see innumerable Māyic (illusory) appearances in on- qualityless Brahman. "When this object has been achieved, that, is to say, when it has been proved by Vivarta-vāda, that it is possible to see the Appearance of the three-constituted qualityful Prakṛti in one qualityless Parabrahman, Vedānta philosophy has no objection to accept

that the further development of that Prakṛti has taken place according to the Guṇa-pariṇāma-vāda. The chief doctrine of Non-Dualistic Vedānta. is that the fundamental Prakṛti is an Appearance, or an Illusion, and that it is not Real. But once this first, Appearance of Prakṛti begins to be seen, Non-Dualist Vedāntists have no objection to accept that the appearances, which are subsequently evolved from this one original Appearance, are not-independent; and to accept that the qualities of one appearance spring out of the qualities of another appearance, and that, in this way, appearances possessing various qualities have come into existence. Therefore, although the Blessed Lord has said in the Gītā that

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"Prakṛti is nothing but My Māyā" (Gī. 7.14; 4.6), the Gītā itself also says that this Prakṛti, which has become imbued with or inhabited by the Parameśvara (Gī. 9.10), is further developed according to the rule "guṇā guṇeṣu varānte" (Gī. 3.28; 14.23). From this it will be clear, that when once the appearance of Māyā has taken place in the fundamentally qualityless Brahman according to Vivarta-vāda, the principle of guṇotkarṣa (Development of Constituents) has been accepted even by the Gītā for explaining this Māyic appearance, that is, this further development of Prakṛti. It is not that because you say that the entire visible world is a Māyic appearance, therefore, there cannot be some such rule like guṇotkarṣa

which controls the changes in form which take place in this Appearance. Vedāntists do not wish to deny that the further development of this Māyic appearance is bound by rules. All that they say is that these rules are also Māyic, like the fundamental Prakṛti, and that the Parameśvara is the Over-Lord of all these Māyic rules, and is beyond them, and that it is by His power that some sort of permanence or regularity has come into these rules. It is not possible for the qualityful, that is, perishable Prakṛti, which is in the form of an Appearance, to lay down rules which are not circumscribed by Time.

From the foregoing discussion, my readers will understand the nature and the mutual relationship between the Jīva (personal self) and the Parameśvara (the Absolute Īśvara), or according to Vedantic terminology, between Māyā (that is, the universe which has been brought into existence by Māyā), the Ātman, and the Parabrahman. From the point of view of the philosophy of the Highest Self, all the things in the universe are divided into two classes, namely, 'Names and Forms, and the Eternal Element' (nitya-tattva) clothed in those Names and Forms. Out of these, 'Names and Forms' are known as the qualityful Māyā or Prakṛti. But when you eliminate the Names and Forms, the Eternal Element (nitya-dravya) which remains, must be qualityless; because, no quality can exist without the support of a Name and Form. This eternal and imperceptible Element is the Parabrahman; and- the weak organs of human beings see the qualityful

Māyā as a growth out of this qualityless Parabrahman. This Māyā is not a Real substance, and it is only the Parabrahman which is Real, that is, uncircumscribed by Time, and never-changing. These are the doctrines which relate to the nature of the Names and Forms of the visible universe and the Parabrahman clothed by them. Now, when the human being is viewed from the same point of view, it is seen that the human body and organs are substances defined by Name and Form, like other substances in the visible world, that is to say, that they fall into the category of the non-permanent Māyā; and that the Annan, which is clothed by this Body and organs, falls into the category of the eternal Parabrahman; or, that the Brahman and the Atman are one and the same. My readers must have now noticed the differences between these Non-Dualistic doctrines, which do not look upon the external world as an independent substance in this sense, and the Buddhistic doctrines. Buddhists, who believe in the Vijñāna-vāda, say that the external world does not exist at all, and that Jñāna (Knowledge) alone is Real; and Vedāntists look upon only the ever-changing Names and Forms of the external universe as unreal, and say that under these Names and Forms, as also in the human body, there is, in both cases, one and the same Ātman-formed Substance; and that this homogeneous Ātman-Element is the ultimate Reality. In the same way, Sāṃkhya

philosophy has accepted the synthesis of the diversity of created things by the law of "avibhaktaṁ vibhakteṣu," only so far as it applies to Gross Matter; but, as the Vedāntists have got over this difficulty of the satkāryavāda and established the doctrine that "whatever is in the Body, is also in the Cosmos," the innumerable Puruṣas and the Prakṛti of Sāṃkhya philosophy have, in Vedānta, philosophy, been comprised in one Paramātmā by the principle of Non-Dualism (advaita) or Non-Division (avibhāga). The purely Materialistic philosopher Haeckel was, it is true, a Non-Dualist. But he includes even Consciousness (caitanya) in Gross Matter, and Vedānta philosophy does not give pre-eminence to the Gross, but proves that the immortal and independent Thought-Formed (cidrūpī) Parabrahman, which is uncircumscribed

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by Time or Space, is the Fundamental Root of the world: this is the most important difference between the Non-Dualism of the philosophy of the Absolute Self and the Gross-Non-Dualism (jaḍādvaita) of Haeckel. The same doctrines of Non-dualistic Vedānta have been mentioned in the Gītā; and an ancient poet has summarised the Non-Dualistic Vedānta philosophy very concisely as follows:—

ślokārdhena pravakṣyāmi yad uktam granthakotibhiḥ ।  
brahma satyam jagan mithyā jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ ॥

that is, "I will explain in half a stanza the summary of a million books – (1) the Brahman is Real, (2) the world (jagat)' that is, all the Names and Forms in the world, are mithyā, or perishable, and (3) the Ātman of a man and the Brahman are fundamentally ONE and the same, and not two." If anybody does not appreciate the word 'mithyā' in this stanza, he is quite welcome to read the third section of the stanza as 'brahmāmṛtaṁ jagat satyam' consistently with the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad;- thereby, the purport does not change at all as has been stated before. Nevertheless, many Vedāntists enter into a fruitless discussion as to whether the invisible but eternal Fundamental Element of the visible world, in the shape of the Brahman,, should be called sat (satya) or asat (asatya = anṛta). I shall, therefore, explain here concisely what the underlying principle in this discussion, is. This discussion has come into existence- because the word sat or satya has two different meanings; and if one first carefully considers in what meaning the word sat has been used by any particular person, no confusion will arise; because, everybody accepts the distinction that though the Brahman is invisible, it is Real, and that though the Name-d and Form-ed Cosmos is visible, yet, it is ever-changing. The ordinary meaning of the word sat or satya is: (1) that which is, at the moment, actually visible to the eyes, that is to say, perceptible (whether this visit's appearance of it,, does or does not change to-morrow); and the other meaning of that word is: (2) that of which the nature always remains the same, and never changes,

notwithstanding that it is invisible- to the eyes, i.e., imperceptible. Those who accept the first meaning say, that the Name-d and Form-ed world which is

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visible to the eyes is satya (visible) and that the Parabrahman is just the opposite, that is, it is not visible to the eyes and therefore, asat or asatya (invisible). For instance, in the Taittirīyopaniṣad, the visible world has been called 'sat', and that which is beyond the visible world, has been called 'tyat' (THAT, that is, which is beyond) or 'anṛta' (invisible to the eyes); and the Brahman is described by saying that that substance which was in existence at the commencement of the world has become two-fold as follows:— "sacca

tyaccābhavat | niruktaṁ cāniruktaṁ ca | nilayanaṁ cānilayanaṁ ca | vijñānaṁ cāvijñānaṁ ca | satyaṁ cānṛtaṁ ca | " (Tai. 2 6), that is: "It became 'sat' (visible to the eyes) and That (which is beyond); describable and indescribable; dependent and independent; known and unknown (unknowable); and real (visible) and invisible". But though the Brahman has in this way been described as 'anṛta', the word anṛta does not mean false or unreal; but later on, in the Taittirīyopaniṣad itself, it is stated that " this anṛta (invisible) Brahman is the 'pratiṣṭhā' (support) of the world, that it does



not depend on anything else, and that he who has realised this need not fear anything". From this it is clear, that though there is a difference in words, there is no difference in the intended meaning. In the same way, it is ultimately said that " asadvā idam agra āsīt", that is, "this world was as *asat* (Brahman) in the beginning"; and, as stated in the Ṛg-Veda (10.129.4), the *sat*, that is, the Name-d and Form-ed perceptible world, is said to have subsequently grown out of it (Tai. 2.7). From this, it becomes quite clear that the word '*asat*' has been used here only in the meaning of *avyakta*, that is, not visible to the eyes; and in the Vedānta-Sūtras, Bādarāyaṇācārya has interpreted those words in the same meaning (Ve. Sū. 2.1.17). But, those who interpret the word '*sat*' or '*satya*', as meaning existing permanently, or ever-lasting, though not visible to the eyes (which is the second of the two meanings mentioned above), give to the invisible but immutable Parabrahman the name *sat* or *satya* and call the Name-d and Form-ed *Māyā*, *asat* or *asatya*, i.e., perishable. For instance, there is a description in the Chāndogya that: "*sadeva saumyedam agra āsīt katham asataḥ sajjāyeta*", that is, "O my son! 1 this world was

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originally *sat* (Brahman); how can '*sat*', that is, that which exists, come into existence out of something which is *asat*, that is, which never was in existence?" (Chān. 6.2.1, 2). But in this Chāndogyopaniṣad itself, the Parabrahman has in one place

been called 'asat.' in the sense of avyakta, that is, imperceptible (Chān. 3.19.1). [1] This confusing method by which the same Parabrahman was at different times and in different meanings given the mutually contradictory names of once 'sat' and at another time 'asat' – which was a method promoting verbal warfare, though the intended import was the same – gradually wore out; and ultimately, the one terminology of calling the Brahman sat or satya, i.e., eternally lasting, and the visible world asat or perishable, has become fixed. In the Bhagavadgītā, this ultimate terminology has been accepted and in the second chapter, the Parabrahman has been described as sat and imperishable, and Names and Forms are described as asat, that is, perishable, in those meanings of those words (Gī. 2.16 – 18); and the same is the doctrine of the Vedānta-Sūtras. Nevertheless, the old terminology of the Taittirīyopaniṣad of referring to the visible world as 'sat' and to the Parabrahman as 'asat' or as 'tyat' (THAT = that which is beyond) has not been totally exterminated; and what the original meaning of the description of the Brahman in the Gītā (Gī. 17.23) as 'OM-Tat-Sat' must have been, can very clearly be seen by reference to the old terminology. 'OM' is a Vedic prayer in the form of a mystic word, and it has been explained

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- [1] Even among the English writers on Metaphysics, there is a difference of opinion as to whether the word real, i.e., sat should be applied to the appearance of the world (Māyā) or to the vastu-tattva (Brahman). Kant looks upon the Appearance as sat real) and calls the vastu-tattva, imperishable. But, Haeckel, Green and others call the Appearance, asat (unreal), and the vastu-tattva, sat (real).

in various ways in the Upaniṣads (Pra. 5; Mān. 8 – 12; Chān. 1.1). 'tat' means 'THAT', that is, the indescribable Element which is far beyond the visible world, and 'sat' is the visible world which can be seen by the eyes; and this canon means that these three together constitute the Brahman. And it is with this import that the

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Blessed Lord has said in the Gītā (Gī. 9.19); that "sad asaccāham arjuna", that is, "sat is the Parabrahman and asat is the visible world, and I am both". Still, in as much as the Gītā propounds the Karma-Yoga, it has been explained at the end of the seventeenth chapter that by taking the word 'sat' in the canon, OM-Tat-Sat, as meaning Action, which is good from the point of view of respectability, or which has been done with a good intention, or of which the result is good, and by taking the word 'tat' as meaning, Action, which is beyond the above-mentioned Action, that is, which has been performed by giving up the desire for fruit, as and when occasion arises to use that canon, the doctrine of Karma-Yoga can be fully supported on the basis of this description of the Brahman. As that which has been referred to as 'sat' in the canon, is nothing else but the visible world, that is to say, Karma (See the next chapter), this interpretation of the definition of the Brahman in terms of Karma, easily arises out of the original interpretation. There are to be found in the Upaniṣads other descriptions of the

Brahman than 'om-tat-sat', 'neti, neti ', 'saccidānanda' and 'satyasya satyam'; but as they are not necessary for understanding the meaning of the Gītā, I have not given them here.

When the mutual relationship between the Cosmos [jagat], the personal Self (jīva) and the Parameśvara (Paramātman) have been explained in this way, it becomes quite clear in what sense one has to take the word 'amśa' used by the Blessed Lord in the phrases "the Jīva is an 'amśa' of Myself" (Gī. 15.7), and "I have pervaded the whole of this world by one 'amśa' " (Gī. 10.42) in the Bhagavadgītā, and also used by Bādarāyaṇācārya in the Vedānta-Sūtras (Ve. Sū. 2. 3. 43; 4.4, 19), or the word 'pāda' used in the Puruṣa-Sūkta in the line "pādo 'sya viśvā bhūtāni tripād asyāmṛtaṁ divi" – 'the jagadātman (the Cosmic-Self) Which has pervaded the moveable and the immovable, and yet remained over ten fingers'. Although the Parameśvara or the Paramātman is all-pervading, yet, as It is unorganised, homogeneous, and devoid of Name and Form, that is to say, uncuttable (acchedya) and immutable (avikārya), it is impossible to break It up into individual pieces (Gī. 2.25). Therefore, in order to distinguish between this

homogeneous Parabrahman which pervades everything on all sides, and the Ātman within the body of a man, one has to say in common parlance that the 'śārīra-ātman' (the Ātman within the body) is an 'amśa' (part) of the Parabrahman. Yet, the word 'amśa' or 'part' has not to be taken in the meaning of 'an independent piece which has been cut-out', or 'one of the grains taken out of the numerous grains in a pomegranate'; and it must be taken in its elementary meaning to indicate that the Ātman is a part of the Parabrahman in the same way as ether (ākāśa) in the house or in an earthenware pot (maṭhākāśa, ghaṭākāśa) are parts of an all-pervading ether (See Amṛtabindūpaniṣad 13). The Sāṃkhya Prakṛti, and the homogeneous element accepted by the Materialistic Gross-Non-Dualism of Haeckel, are in the same way qualityful, that is, limited, parts of the Real qualityless Parameśvara. Nay, whatever perceptible or imperceptible fundamental element is arrived at according to the Materialistic sciences, (then may it be how much soever comprehensive like ether), it is only a Name and Form broken in upon by Time and Space, that is to say,, it is perishable and limited. It is true that it has occupied the Parabrahman to the extent of its capacity, but instead of the Parabrahman being thereby in any way limited, It has fully pervaded and saturated the former and one cannot gauge to what extent It remains over. Although the words 'daśāṅgula' (ten fingers), or 'tripāda' (three steps) have been used in the Puruṣa-Sūkta in order to indicate to what extent the Parameśvara has gone beyond the visible universe, yet, they

are to be taken as meaning 'ananta' (endless); because, strictly speaking, Space and Time, weights and measures, and even numbers are only kinds of Names and Forms; and it has been shown above that the Parabrahman is beyond all these Names and Forms. Therefore, the Parabrahman has been described in the Upaniṣads as, that Element which swallows up or absorbs 'kāla' (Time), which 'kāla' has swallowed up everything (Mai. 6.15); and the same is the purport conveyed by the descriptions to be found in the Gītā and in the Upaniṣads of the habitation of the Parameśvara, such as, " na tad bhāsayate sūryo na śaśāṅko na pāvakaḥ", that is, "there is no such

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luminary object like the Sun or the Moon or Fire for illuminating the seat of the Parameśvara, who is self-illuminated" (Gī. 15.6; Kāṭha. 5.15; Śve. 6. 14). The Sun, the Moon, the stars, etc., are Name-d and Form-ed perishable objects. That self-illuminated Knowledge-filled Brahman which is "jyotiṣām jyotiḥ" (Gī. 13.17; Bṛ. 4.4.16)– that is, "brilliance of brilliance" – extends endlessly beyond all of them; and it is stated in the Upaniṣads that not only does It not depend on any other luminary objects, but whatever light is possessed by the Sun, the Moon etc., is obtained by them from this self-illuminated Brahman (Muṇ. 2.2.10). Take the most subtle or the most distant object, which is made perceptible to the organs by instruments invented by Material sciences; it is but the

world denned by Name and Form, which is circumscribed by the limitations of Time and Space. As the true Parameśvara is in them, and yet different from and more comprehensive than all of them, and also homogeneous and uncircumscribed by the bonds of Names and Forms, that is to say, as He is independent, it is not possible for the devices or instruments of Material sciences, which consider merely Names and Forms, to find out the 'amṛta-tattva' (imperishable Element) which is the Boot of the world, though they might become a thousand times more subtle or comprehensive than they are at present. That imperishable, immutable and undying element must ultimately be found out by the Path of Knowledge shown in the philosophy of the Absolute Self.

From the exposition of the principal doctrines of the philosophy of the Absolute Self and their concise scientific explanation given so far, it will be clear why all the perceptible Name-d and Form-ed appearances of the Parameśvara are Māyic or perishable, why His imperceptible form is superior to them, why His qualityless form, that is, the form undefined by Name and Form, is still superior, and why it is stated in the Gītā that the qualityless form seems qualityful as a result of ignorance. But this work of setting out these doctrines in words can be easily done by anyone who has acquired a little knowledge like me; there is nothing much in that. In order that these doctrines should be impressed on the mind, engraved on the heart and ingrained in one's flesh and

bone after they have been understood, and that one should thereby fully realise that there is only one Parabrahman which saturates all living things; and in order that by reason, of such feeling, one should acquire an immutable mental frame which will enable one to behave with equability towards everybody in times of misfortune, it is necessary to have the continual additional help of impressions acquired during, numerous births, control of the organs, persevering practice, meditation, and worship. Therefore, the summary of all the above doctrines, and the highest doctrine of the philosophy of the Absolute Self is: only that man may be said to have become fully saturated with the knowledge of the Brahman in whose every action the principle, "there is only one Ātman in all created things", has become naturally and clearly visible, even in times of distress; and such a man alone gets Release (Gī. 5.18 – 20; 6.21, 22). The 'earthenware pot' of that man in whom such behaviour is not to be seen is to that extent imperfectly or insufficiently 'baked', in the fire of the Knowledge of the Brahman. This is the difference between real saints and mere Vedāntists; and, therefore, in describing Knowledge, it is stated in the Gītā that true Knowledge may be said to have been acquired, when noble emotions like "humility (amānitva), peacefulness (śānti), self-control (ātmanigraha), equability of mind (samabuddhi)" are



awakened,. whereby the total purification of the mind is continually expressed in conduct, instead of saying that 'Knowledge is the understanding by Reason of what is at the root of the external world' (Gī. 13.7 – 11). That man whose Discerning Reason has become devoted to the Self, that is, has become steady in the contemplation on the Self and Non-Self, and who has Realised the identity of the Ātman with all created beings, must, undoubtedly, also possess a Desiring Reason which is pure. But, as there is no other external measure except a man's conduct for finding out the state of his Reason, the words 'jñāna' (Knowledge) or 'samabuddhi' (equable mind) are usually made to include the pure Discerning Reason, the pure Desiring Reason, and pure Conduct; this thing must be borne in mind, especially in these days of bookish knowledge. There may be many who

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can give long dry discourses on the Brahman, and also others who hearing those discourses will nod their heads in appreciation and say 'Hear, hear', or, like courtiers in a drama, say,. "Let us hear the same thing again " (Gī. 2.29; Ka. 2.7); but, as stated above, that man who has become internally and externally pure, that is, equable in mind, is the true devotee of the Ātman, and he alone attains Release, and not mere learned men who may be how well-read or intelligent soever. It has been plainly stated in the Upaniṣads that: "nāyam ātma

pravacanena labhyo na medhayā na bahunā śrutena" (Ka. 2.22; Muṇ. 3.2.3.), (that is, "this Ātman is not reached by giving discourses, nor by intelligence, nor by great learning" ~Translator.), and the Saint Tukārāma has also said:— "you have become a Pandit (i.e., learned man), you interpret the Purāṇas; but you do not know who you are || " (Gā. 2599). See how narrow our minds are! The words 'attains Release' easily come out of our mouths, as if Release is something different from the Ātman. There would be difference between the Observer and the visible world, before the Knowledge has been acquired that the Brahman and the Ātman are identical; but, our Vedāntists- have come to the conclusion that when one has fully Realised the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, the Ātman is merged into the Brahman, and the brahmajñānī (one who has Realised the Brahman) acquires the form of Brahman wherever he is; and. this Metaphysical state is known as the 'brahmanirvāṇa Release,' which is not given by anybody to anybody, and which does not come from anywhere, and for obtaining which it is not necessary to leave this world and to go to another world. Whenever and wherever the complete Realisation of the Ātman comes, Release is obtained at that very moment and at that place; because, Release is the fundamental pure, state of the Ātman, and is not some independent thing or place. There is a stanza in the Śiva-Gītā that:—

mokṣasya na hi vāso 'sti na grāmāntaram eva vā ।

ajñānahṛdayagranthināśo mokṣa iti smṛtaḥ || (Śiva.  
13.32)

that is, "Release is not in a particular place, nor has one to go to some other town or country in order to obtain it: the destruction

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of the knot of Ignorance (ajñāna) round our hearts is known as Release". And this final conclusion which arises out of the philosophy of the Absolute Self has been described in the words "abhito brahmanirvāṇaṁ vartate viditātmanām" (Gī. 5.26), i.e., "those, who have fully Released the Atman, attain Released in the form of brahmanirvāṇa wherever they may be", or, "yaḥ sadā mukta eva saḥ" (Gī. 5.28) in the Bhagavadgītā, as also in the canons, "brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati", i.e., "he who has Realised the Brahman has become Brahman" (Muṇ. 3.2.9) etc., in the Upaniṣads. Therefore, this state of perfection of the human Ātman from the point of view of Knowledge is known as the 'brahmabhūta' (Gī. 18.54), or, 'the Brāhmī state' (Gī. 2.72). Descriptions to be found elsewhere in the Bhagavadgītā of the 'sthitaprajña' (steady-in-mind), (Gī. 2.55 – 72), 'bhaktimān' (devotee), or 'triguṇātīta' (beyond the three constituents) (Gī. 14.2 – 2) or of this state. From the term, 'triguṇātīta', one is not to draw the conclusion that the Gītā looks upon Prakṛti and Puruṣa as independent.

The isolation (Kaivalya) of the Puruṣa is looked upon as Release, as is done by the Sāṃkhyas. According to Gītā, the Brāhmī state described in the philosophy of the Absolute Self by the words, "ahaṃ brahmāsmi", i.e., "I am the Brahman" (Br. 1.4.10), is obtained sometimes by the Path of Devotion, sometimes by Pātañjala Yoga practice of the Control of the Mind, and sometimes by the path of the Discernment of Constituents (guṇāguṇa-vivecana) described in Sāṃkhya philosophy. As the philosophy of the Absolute Self, out of these paths is purely rational philosophy, Devotion has been mentioned in the Gītā as the easiest means for an ordinary person for acquiring the Knowledge of the form of the Parameśvara. We have later on, in the thirteenth chapter, fully consider this matter. Whatever may be the means employed, this much is beyond doubt, that attaining the Knowledge of the true Parameśvara, that is, Realising the identity of the Brahman and Atman, and that there is only one Atman in all created beings, and behaving accordingly, is the climax of Spiritual Knowledge (adhyātma-jñāna). Those who have reached this state are indeed blessed and perfect. As has been stated above, as organic pleasure is the same in the case of men as of animals, the purpose of a human birth or the manhood of man is fully satisfied only by the acquisition of Knowledge. Continually observing this equability of Mind towards all created beings in the performance of all bodily, vocal or mental Actions is known as the 'nityamuktāvasthā' (state of perpetual Release), 'pūrṇa-yoga' (perfect Yoga),

'siddhāvasthā' (the state of a perfect being). The saint Jñāneśvara, in commenting on the description of the Devotee in the twelfth chapter of the Gītā (Gī. 12.18) says:—

Oh, Pārtha, that man in whom  
there is no trace of differentiation  
Who, both friend and foe, looks upon as alike.  
Lighting his own house  
and leaving the house of another in darkness  
A thing which he never does, O Pāṇḍava  
like a light.  
To the one who deals the blow to cut  
and to the one who planted it  
It (the tree) gives both of them shelter  
like the tree.

And earlier in the same chapter, in commenting on the 13th stanza of the Gītā, he says:—

Supporting the best  
rejecting the worst  
Is a thing which he does not do  
he is like the earth.  
Activating the body of a king  
And refusing to activate the body of a poor man  
Is a thing which the Prana (Vital Force) does not do  
so is he; he is kind.  
Staking the thirst of a cow  
and becoming a poison to kill a tiger.  
Is a thing which water does not do

he is like water.

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Towards all created beings  
he is friendly, looking upon all as one  
He is kind to all  
with a sense of equability.  
He does not know the word 'I'  
he does not say of anything that it is ' mine'  
Experience of pain and happiness  
for him there is none.(Jñā. 12. 145 – 149).

And Jñāneśvara has thus, by giving numerous illustrations,, and in very sweet and attractive language, described in Marathi the equability of the Brahmified man; and we may safely say, that this description contains a summary of the description of the Brāhmī state given in four different places in the Gītā. This is what is to be ultimately acquired by Spiritual Knowledge.

My readers will have understood from what has been, stated above, how the tradition of Spiritual Knowledge, which is the root of the science of Release, has come to us in an unbroken line from the Upaniṣads right upto Tukārāma. But, in order to impress on my readers that this knowledge had come into existence in our country even before the date of the Upaniṣads, that is to say, already in very very ancient times,

and that the ideas in the Upaniṣads have gradually grown from those times, I shall give here, before concluding, a well-known hymn (sūkta) from the Ṛg-Veda, which is the foundation even of the Spiritual Knowledge in the Upaniṣads, together with its Marathi translation. Not only do we not come across in the scriptures of any religion, critical philosophical ideas, as to what the unknowable Fundamental Element of the Cosmos must have been, and how this variegated visible universe sprang from it, which are as comprehensive, independent and root-touching as those in this hymn, but no one has yet come across any text replete with such Spiritual Knowledge, which is equal to it in point of antiquity. Therefore, many wonder-struck Western scholars have translated this hymn into their various

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languages, looking upon it as important, from the point of view of religious history, for showing how the natural tendency of the human mind runs beyond the Name-d and Form-ed universe to reach the permanent and unimaginable Brahman-Energy which is beyond it. This hymn is the 129th hymn in the tenth mandala of the Ṛg-Veda, and is known as the 'Nāsadīya-Sūkta', having regard to its commencing words. And this Sūkta has been adopted in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa (2.8.9), and the description given in the Nārāyaṇīya or the Bhāgavata religion in the Mahābhārata as to how the universe was first created

by the desire of the Blessed Lord has been, based on this hymn (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 342.8). According to the general index (sarvānukramaṇikā), the Ṛṣi of this hymn is Parameṣṭhi Prajapati, its deity is the Paramātmān, and it consists of seven stanzas (ṛcā) in the triṣṭupa metre, each stanza containing four lines of eleven words each. As the words, sat and asat, have a double meaning, the difference of opinion among the writers of the Upaniṣads, as regards describing the Fundamental Element of the world as 'sat' which has been referred to earlier in this chapter, is also to be found in the Ṛg-Veda. For instance, this Fundamental Cause of the world is in some places described by saying "ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanti" (Ṛg. 1.164.46), or "ekam santaṁ bahudhā kalpayanti" (Ṛg. 10.114.5) – that is, "It, being one and sat (i.e., lasting forever), has been given different names by people "; whereas in other places, it has been described by saying: "devānāṁ pūrve yuge 'sataḥ sad ajāyata" (Ṛg. 10.72.7), that is, "the sat, that is, the perceptible universe, came into existence out of the asat, that is, the Imperceptible, even before the gods had come into existence." In addition to this, there are other descriptions all differing from, each other in the Ṛg-Veda itself as to how the entire universe came into being out of one visible Element, e.g.,:- in the beginning of the world, there was the Golden Embryo (hiraṇyagarbha), of which both death and immortality are shadows, and. It later on created the entire world (Ṛg. 10.121.1, 2); or, that, a Virāṭa-formed Puruṣa existed at first, and from him the entire world was created by means of a



sacrifice (Ṛg. 10.90): or,, that there was āpa (water) at first, and in that water Prajāpati

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came into existence (Ṛg. 10.72.6; 10.82.6); or, that ṛcā and satya first came into existence, and afterwards, darkness; and after that, water (samudra), the year etc. came into existence (Ṛg. 10.190.1). These Fundamental Elements mentioned in the Ṛg-Veda have been later on referred to as follows:— (1) in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa, water has been referred to as the Fundamental Element as: "āpo vā idam agre salilam āsīt" (Tai. Bra. 1. 1. 3. 5), i.e., "all this was liquid water in the beginning"; (2) in the Taittirīyopaniṣad, asat has been mentioned as the Fundamental Element, as: "asad vā idam agra āsīt" (Tai. 2.7), i.e., "all this was asat in the beginning"; (3) in the Chāndogyaopaniṣad, sat has been mentioned as the Fundamental Element, as: "sad eva saumyedaṃ agra āsīt" (Chān. 6.2), i.e., "all this was sat in the beginning"; or, (4) ether is said to be such Element, as: "ākāśaḥ parāyaṇam" (Chān. 1.9), i.e., "ether was the root of everything"; (5) in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka, death (mṛtyu) is mentioned as the Fundamental Element, as: "naiveha kimcanāgra āsīn mṛtyunaivedaṃ āvṛtaṃ āsīt" (Bṛ. 1.2.1), i.e., "in the beginning, there was nothing whatsoever; every- thing was covered by death"; and (6) in the Maitryupaniṣad, darkness [tamas] has been mentioned as the Fundamental Element, as: "tamo vā

idam agra āsīd ekam" (Mai. 5.2), i.e., "this entire universe was in the beginning tamas (tamoguṇī, darkness)", and sattva and rajas afterwards came into existence out of it. In the same way, the Manu-Smṛti contains the following description of the commencement of the universe, consistent with these descriptions in the Vedas:—

āsīd idam tamobhītam aprajñātam alakṣaṇam ।

apratarkyam avijñeyam prasuptam iva sarvataḥ ॥

that is, "all this was first covered up by darkness (tamas), and it was undiscernible and as if in a sleeping state, so that it would be impossible to differentiate between one thing and another; thereafter, the imperceptible Paramātmā entered it and first created water" (Manu. 1.5 – 8). Such and other different descriptions about the Fundamental Substance existing at the commencement of the universe must have been in vogue even at the time of the Nāsadīya-Sūkta; and the question as to which of these Fundamental Substances, was

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the really fundamental one, must also then have arisen. Therefore, the Ṛṣi of that hymn gives the following explanation, in order to explain what the truth (bīja) about the whole thing was in the following words:—

nāsadāsīn no sad āsīt tadānīm nāsīd rajo no vyomā paro  
yat ।  
kim āvarīvaḥ kuha kasya śarma nnambhaḥ kim āsīd  
gahanam gabhīram ॥ 1 ॥

that is: (1) "then, that is, in the beginning, there was neither  
asat, nor sat, nor the firmament (antarikṣa), nor the ether  
(ākāśa) beyond it. (In this state) who (can be said to have)  
covered (whom)? Where? For whose benefit ? Was there  
(even) unfathomable and deep water?" [1]

na mṛtyur āsīd amṛtaṁ na tarhi na rātryā anha āsīt  
praketaḥ ।  
ānīd avātaṁ svadhayā tad ekam tasmād dhānyan na  
paraḥ kimcanāsa ॥ 2 ॥

that is: (2) "then, death, that is, the perishable, visible, mortal  
universe was not existing; and, therefore, there was not (the  
distinction of) also (another) amṛta, i.e., imperishable, eternal  
substance. (Similarly) there was no means (= praketa) for  
finding out the difference between day and night. (Whatever  
there was) That solitary thing was breathing, that is, throbbing  
by svadhā, that is, by its own power, without there being any  
air. Except or beyond that, there was nothing."

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[1] First ṛcā :— I have given the above meaning, analysing the words "kim  
āsīd" in the fourth line as "āsīt kim"; and the purport of it is, "water did  
not exist then" (Tai. Brā, 2.2.9).

tama āsīt tamasā gūḍham agre 'praketaṁ salilaṁ  
sarvamā idam ।  
tucchenābhvapihitaṁ yad āsīt tapasas tan mahinā  
'jāyataikam ॥ 3 ॥

that is: (3) "though there was (said to be) darkness in the beginning; or that all this was water enveloped in darkness devoid of any differentiation; (or) that ābhu, that is, the all-pervading Brahman was (from the beginning) covered by tuccha, that is, by illusory Māyā; yet, that came into existence

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as a result of austerity (subsequently, by transformation), from the fundamentally one Brahman" [1]

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[1] Third ṛcā :— Soma commentators consider the first three lines of this stanza as independent, and interpret it by saying that in the beginning of the universe, there was "darkness, or water covered by darkness, or ābhu (void) covered by tuccha". But, according to me that interpretation is not correct. Because, if in the first two stanzas there is a clear statement that nothing whatsoever existed in the beginning, it is not possible that it should be stated in this ṛcā that there was in the beginning either darkness or water – which is something quite the opposite. Besides, according to this interpretation, the word yat in the third part of the stanza has to be considered meaningless; therefore, it becomes necessary to refer the word 'yat', in the third part of the stanza, to the word 'yat' in the fourth part, and to interpret the stanza as has been done by me above. This ṛcā has been included in this hymn

kāmas tad agre samavartatādhi manaso retaḥ  
prathamam yad āsīt ।  
sato bandhum asati niravindan hṛdi pratīṣyā kavayo  
manīṣā ॥ 4 ॥

that is: (4) "the semen, that is, the seed of the Mind (of This) which first came into existence, became Kāma (that is, the desire or the power to create the world). (This is) the (first) relation between sat, that is, the perishable visible world, and

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the asat, that is, the fundamental Parabrahman, as has been ascertained by scientists by means of their Reason, by meditating in their minds".

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as an answer to those persons who maintained that there were in the beginning substances like water etc.; and what the Ṛṣi intended to say was that there were no fundamental substances like darkness, water etc., as was said by these people, but that, all that was the further development of one and the same Brahman. As the two words 'tuccha' and 'ābhu' are mutually opposite, the word ābhu means opposite of tuccha, that is to say, big or powerful, and the same meaning has been given to it by Sāyaṇacārya in the other two places where that word occurs in the Ṛg-Veda (Ṛg. 10.27.1, 4). In the Pañcadaśī (Chitra. 129, 130), the word tuccha has been interpreted as meaning Māyā (See Nṛsiṃh. Uttā. 9). Therefore, ābhu has not to be interpreted as meaning 'void' but as Parabrahman. The word āḥ (a + as) in the phrase 'sarvam āḥ idam' is the past tense form of the root as, and it means 'āsīt', that is, 'was'.

tiraścīno vitato raśmireṣām adhaḥ svid āsīd upari svid  
āsīt ।

retodhā āsan mahimāna āsan svadhā avastāt prayatiḥ  
parastāt ॥ 5 ॥

that is: (5) "(this) raśmi, that is, shred or ray, fell transversely  
[between] them; and if you say it was below, it was also above;  
(some of these) became retodhā, that is, productive of seed,  
and (growing) became bigger. Their self-prowess (svaśakti)  
pervaded on one side, and prayati, that is, development  
(pervaded everything) on the other side".

ko addhā veda ka iha pra vocat kuta ājātā kuta iyaṁ  
viśṛṣṭiḥ ।

arvāg devā asya visarjanenātha ko veda yata ābabhūva  
॥ 6 ॥

that is: (6) "who is there who can in greater (than this) detail  
(pra), explain how came the visarga, that is, the development  
(of the sat) and from whom it came? Who knows this  
definitely? Even the gods came after the visarga of this (visible  
sat universe). Then who is to know from where it came?"

iyaṁ viśṛṣṭir yat ābabhūva yadi vā dadhe yadi vā na  
dadhe ।

yo asyādhyakṣaḥ parame vyoman so aṅga veda yadi vā  
na veda ॥ 7 ॥

that is: (7) "The adhyakṣa (Hiraṇyagarbha) of this universe, inhabiting the highest (parama) firmament, may know the place from where the development of this sat came about, or, from where it was created, or was not created; or, even the Hiraṇyagarbha may not be knowing it! (Who is in a position to say that?)".

The sum and substance of Vedānta philosophy is, that one should not remain enmeshed in the various Name-d and Form-ed, mutable and perishable Appearances which are perceptible to the eyes or the other organs, but should recognise by means of Knowledge that THERE IS SOME, ONE AND IMMORTAL ELEMENT, which is beyond them; and, the

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fact that the Reason of the Ṛṣi who composed this hymn unerringly grasped the crux of the whole matter at the first attempt, clearly shows the keenness of his introspection! Instead of entering into a discussion with persons, who raised the questions, whether That, which existed in the beginning of the universe and before the various things in the world came into existence, was sat or asat, death or immortality, ether or water, light or darkness etc., this Ṛṣi speeds beyond all of them, and says that sat and asat, mortal and immortal light and darkness, the covering and the covered, the giver of

happiness and the feeler of happiness, are mutually dependent opposites, which came into existence after the visible world was created; and he asks, who was there to cover whom before these opposite couples in the world came into existence, that is- to say, when there was no such difference as this one and that one. The Ṛṣi of this hymn, therefore, says, to start with, that it is not proper to describe the Fundamental, homogeneous, Substance as sat or asat, ether or water, light or darkness, death or immortality, or by such other mutually dependent expressions; he says, that whatever there was, was stranger than all these things; that It was one and one alone, and was throbbing in all directions by its inexhaustible energy; and that there was nothing else which was a mate to it or which covered it. The root word 'an' in the verb 'ānīt' in the second ṛcā means to breathe or to throb; and the word 'prāṇa' is derived from that root. But who can say that That, which was neither sat nor asat, was breathing like a living being? and where was the air to breathe? Therefore, the words avātaṁ (that is, without air) and svadhayā (by its own prowess) have been added to the word 'ānīt', and the idea that the Fundamental Element of the world was not Gross Matter, which (idea) pertains to the stage of Non-Dualism, has been very skilfully described in the language of Dualism by saying that "that ONE substance was breathing or throbbing by Its own prowess without air, that is, without depending on air!"; and the apparent contradiction in terms, which is involved in this, is 'the result of the insufficiency of Dualistic terminology.



The descriptions of the Parabrahman to be found in the Upaniṣads, such as, "neti, neti", or "ekamevādvitīyam" or "sve

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mahimni pratiṣṭhitāḥ" (Chān. 7.24.1), that is, "that which subsists by Itself alone, by Its own prowess, that is, without depending on anyone else", are mere repetitions of this idea. It is clear that that indescribable Element, which has been referred to in this hymn as throbbing in all directions at the commencement of the entire universe, will survive when the entire visible universe is destroyed. Therefore, this same Parabrahman has been described in the Gītā with a slight amplification, in the words: "Which is not destroyed though all other things are destroyed" (Gī. 8.20); and it is stated later on (Gī. 13.12) by clear reference to this hymn that "It is neither sat nor asat". But, if there was nothing in the beginning except the qualityless Brahman, a difficulty arises as to how to dispose of such descriptions as, "there were in the beginning, water, darkness, or the couple of ābhū and tuccha", which are to be found even in the Vedas. Therefore, this Ṛṣi says in the third ṛcā, that the descriptions, which we come; across, to the effect that in the beginning of the universe there- was darkness, or water clothed in darkness, or, that ābhū (Brahman) and the Māyā (tuccha) which covered It, existed from the very beginning, are descriptions of the ONE and sole, fundamental Parabrahman, after It had developed into a diversified

expansion by the prowess of Its austere meditation, and not of Its fundamental state. The word 'tapa' in this ṛcā is intended to describe the wonderful Spiritual: power of the fundamental Brahman, and the same thing is described in the fourth ṛcā. (See Muṇ. 1.1.9). It need not be said that that Fundamental Substance, the result of the prowess of Which is this entire universe, according to the saying: "etāvān asya mahimā 'to jyāyāṁś ca pūruṣaḥ" (Ṛg. 10.90.3), is beyond such universe and superior to and different from everything. But, though this Ṛṣi had, in this way, at a stroke cast off all Dualistic couples like, the object to be seen and the observer, the enjoyer and the enjoyed, the clothed and the clothed, darkness and light, mortal and immortal etc., and come to the conclusion that there was fundamentally only one unmixed wonderful Parabrahman in the form of Consciousness (i.e., cidrūpī), yet, when he was faced with the problem of having to explain how the diverse, perishable, qualityful,

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Name-d and Form-ed universe, consisting of the couples of water etc. or the three-constituted Prakṛti from which it (the universe) sprang, had come into existence out of this ONE and sole, indescribable, and qualityless Element, he had to take shelter under the Dualistic terminology of Mind, Desire, asat, sat etc., and he ultimately frankly admits that this question is beyond the grasp of human Reason. In the fourth ṛcā, the

fundamental Brahman has been referred to as *asat*; but that word cannot be interpreted as meaning 'nothing'; because, already in the second ṛcā, there is a clear statement that 'It is'. Not only in this hymn, but in the Ṛg-Veda and the Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā, moot questions have been asked, making use of the language of ordinary parlance, by comparing the visible world with a sacrifice (*yajña*), and asking from where the ingredients such as, clarified butter, dried sticks etc. necessary for performing the *yajña* were initially brought (Ṛg. 10.130.3); or, by taking the illustration of a house, and asking the question as to from where the timber (fundamental *Prakṛti*) for constructing this imposing edifice of ether and the earth, which is actually visible to the eyes, out of one Fundamental qualityless Substance, was brought; such as, "*kiṁ svid vavaṁ ka u sa vṛkṣa āsa yato dyāvāprthvī niṣṭatakṣuḥ*" (Ṛg. 10.31.7; 10.81.4; Vāja. Saṁ. 17.20). These questions cannot be answered further than by saying what has been said in the fourth and fifth stanzas of this hymn, that is to say, by saying that the Kāma-formed Element of creating the universe, somehow or other came into existence in the Mind of that indescribable ONE and Bole Parabrahman, and that the entire development of *sat*, that is, the imposing edifice of ether and earth, came into existence as a result of its branches spreading out above and below, and in all directions like the threads in a piece of cloth or the rays of sunshine. (Vāja. Saṁ. 33.74). And, therefore, the meaning conveyed in this hymn has been adopted in the Upaniṣads in the words:—

"so 'kāmayata | bahu syām prajāyeyeti | " (Tai 2.6;  
Chān. 6.2.3),

that is, "that Parabrahman acquired the Desire of becoming multifarious" (See Br. 1.1.4); and even in the Atharva-Veda, there is a statement that 'Kāma' (Desire) came first into existence out of the Fundamental Substance at the root of the

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visible world (Atharva. 9. 2. 19). But, the wonder about this hymn is, that instead of becoming a slave to Reason like the Sāṃkhyas, and imagining the existence of another self-created and independent element like Fundamental Matter, because the question of the creation of the Qualityful from the Qualityless, or of the *asat* from the *sat*, or of the *dvaṃdva* (subject to doubles) from the *nirdvaṃdva* (beyond doubles), or of the *saṅga* (attached) from the *asaṅga* (unattached), is beyond the grasp of human intelligence, this Ṛṣi frankly says: "Say that you do not understand that which you do not understand; but on that account, it is not proper to give to the Illusion in the form of the visible world, the same value as the indescribable Brahman, which has been definitely ascertained by means of an absolutely purified Mind and as a self-experience. Besides, one must also realise that even if one considers, the three constituted *Prakṛti* as a second independent substance, one still cannot answer the question

as to how Reason (mahān) or Individuation first entered that substance, in order that the universe should be created; and if this difficulty cannot be overcome, where is the point in looking upon Prakṛti as independent? All that one need say is, that it is impossible to understand how Prakṛti or sat came into existence out of the fundamental Brahman. For that, it is not necessary to look upon Prakṛti as independent. It is not possible even for gods to find out how sat came into existence; much less, then, for human intelligence; because, as even the gods came into existence after the visible world, how can they know anything about it? (Gī. 10.2). But, someone may here raise the following doubt: it is stated in the Bg.-Veda itself that the Hiranyagarbha is prior in point of time and superior even to the gods, that He alone was in the beginning "bhūtasya jātaḥ putireka āsīt" (Ṛg. 10.121.1), that is, "the 'pati', oi 'king', or, 'adhyakṣa', of the entire universe"; then, how can He not be knowing this Thing?; and, if it is possible for Him to have known it, how can you say that It is unknowable? Therefore, the Ṛṣi gives, in the beginning, a formal answer to that question by saying: "Yes, He may be knowing the answer to it"; but, immediately thereafter, this Ṛṣi who seeks by his Reason to fathom the knowledge of even Brahmadeva, ultimately and

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in a state of doubt says: "Or, He may even not be knowing it. Who can say?; because, as He also falls within the category of

sat, how can this 'adhyakṣa' or king of the universe, who lives in what is in fact ether (ākāśa), though you may call it 'parama', have a definite knowledge about something which existed before sat or asat, ether or water, came into existence?" But, although he does not know how this ONE, asat, that is, imperceptible, and qualityless Substance came into contact with the variegated Name-d and Form-ed sat, that is, Prakṛti, yet, he does not swerve from his Non- Dualistic conviction that this fundamental Brahman is ONE and only ONE!. This is an excellent example of how the human mind fearlessly roams about like a lion in the impregnable forests of unimaginable things, on the strength of its sāttvika devotion and its pure inspiration, and defines, to whatever extent it can, the unimaginable things existing in that forest; and it is really a matter of great surprise that this hymn is to be found in the Ṛg-Veda. The subject-matter of this hymn has been very minutely examined in our country, and also by Kant and other philosophers in the Western countries, by considering the Brahmanas, the Upaniṣads , and the later treatises on Vedānta philosophy (Taitti. Brā. 2.8.9). But, nobody has so far gone beyond giving to the opposite party convincing arguments like the Vivartavāda for making firmer, clearer, or logically more unquestionable those very doctrines which inspired the pure mind of this Ṛṣi, as appearing in this hymn; and we need not entertain any hopes that anybody will do so.

The chapter on the philosophy of the Absolute Self, (adhyātma) is now over. Before I go further, I will, following the usual practice of the 'kesari' (lion), and look back on the subject-matter or road which I have so far traversed; because, unless such a lion-look has been given, there is a risk of the link between this subject-matter and the next being lost, and of one's going astray. In the beginning of this book, after introducing my readers to the subject-matter, I have concisely explained to them the nature of Karma-jijñāsā (Desire for Action), and shown to them in the third chapter, that the science of Karma-Yoga (Proper Action) is the subject-matter

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of exposition in the Gītā. Then, after having proved in the fourth, fifth and sixth chapters, by considering the question, of happiness and unhappiness, that the Materialistic exposition of this subject-matter is one-sided and insufficient, and that its Intuitional exposition is lame, I have before entering into the Metaphysical exposition of Karma-Yoga. and already in the sixth chapter, dealt with the question of the Body and the Ātman in order to determine what the Ātman is; and having in the seventh and eighth chapters dealt with the subject-matter of the Mutable and the Immutable according to the Dualistic Sāṃkhya philosophy, I have in this chapter explained what the nature of the Atman is, and in what way ONE, sole, immortal and qualityless Atman-Element saturates fully and eternally

both the Body and the Cosmos; and I have finally drawn the conclusion that the Yoga of acquiring an equable frame of Mind, which believes that there is only one Atman in all created beings, and keeping that frame of Mind perpetually alive, is the climax of Self-Knowledge (ātmajñāna) and of Self-Happiness (ātmānanda); and that the highest humanness of man, that is, the fulfilment of the purpose of human birth, or the highest ideal of a human being, consists in bringing one's mind to this pure Self-Devoted (ātma-niṣṭha) state. Having, in this way, determined what the highest Metaphysical ideal (if mankind is, the question as to the basis on which one has to perform all the various Actions in this world, or, as to what is the nature of that Pure Reason with which those Actions are to be performed, which is the principal question in the science of Karma-Yoga, is ipso facto resolved. Because, as need not be told, all these Actions must be performed in such a way as will not be ultimately inconsistent with, but will foster, that equable frame of mind, which looks upon the Brahman as identical with the Ātman. This Metaphysical philosophy of Karma-Yoga has been explained to Arjuna in the Bhagavadgītā. But, the justification of the Karma-Yoga is not thereby finished. Some persons say that in as much as the Actions to be performed in this Name-d and Form-ed world are inconsistent with Self-Knowledge, a scient must give them up. And, if that were so, all the activities in the world would become unperformable, and consequently, the science of what



ought to be done and what ought not to be done would also become meaningless! Therefore in order to determine this question, the Karma-Yoga science must also deal with such important question as: what are the rules relating to Action, and what are the effects of Action, or why this Action or Karma must be performed, although the Mind may have become purified. These questions have also been dealt with in the Bhagavadgītā. As people following the Path of Renunciation attach no importance to these questions, they usually begin to close their shop as soon as the subject-matter of Vedānta or of Devotion in the Bhagavadgītā has been dealt with. But, doing so, amounts to sadly neglecting the most important doctrine enunciated in the Gītā. What answers have been given in the Bhagavadgītā to these various questions? Let us see them ahead.

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# CHAPTER X.

## KARMA-VIPĀKA AND ĀTMA-SVĀTAMTRYA

### (The Effect of Karma and Freedom of Will)

karmaṇā badhyate jantur vidyayā tu pramucyate | [1]

~ Māhabhārata, Śānti. (240.7).

Although the proposition that, whatever there is in the world is the Parabrahman, and that there is nothing else besides the Parabrahman, is true in effect. When one passes through the sieve of Spiritual Knowledge the various objects in the visible world, which are perceived by the human organs, one has to divide everything into two factors. They are (i) the daily changing, that is, non-permanent Name-d and form-ed Appearance of those objects, and (ii) the invisible but permanent Paramātmā-Element, which is clothed in these Names and Forms. It is true that these two factors cannot be placed before the eyes individual, in the same way as a substances is analysed and its components separated from

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[1] "A living being is bound by Karma, and is released by Knowledge."

each other in Chemistry. But, from the point of view of Knowledge, these two factors could be separated from each other and for convenience of scientific treatment, they are respectively called 'Brahman' and 'Māyā', or the 'BRAHMAN-WORLD' and the 'MĀYĀ-WORLD'. Nevertheless, as the brahman is fundamentally Eternal and Real, the word world is suffixed to it merely for rhyme. The word Brahman-world is not understood as indicating that the Brahman was created by somebody. We have considered, in the last chapter, what is pure form of the Ātman and the highest ideal of mankind are. This is by searching with spiritual eyes, the Brahman-world out of these two worlds, which is not limited by Names and Forms like Time and Space, is internal and independent, and which remaining at the core of the visible world, is the foundation of it. The pure philosophy of the Absolute-Self ends at this point. But, although the human Ātman belongs to the

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fundamentally to the Brahman-world, yet, like other things in the visible world, it is covered by bodily organs in the shape of Names and Forms, and these Names and Forms in the shape of the bodily organs are perishable. Therefore, every human being is naturally desirous of knowing how it is possible to escape from these Names and Forms, and to attain immortality; and, in order to consider what mode of life has to be adopted for satisfying that desire, which subject belongs to

the science of Karma-Yoga, we must now enter the Dualistic territory of the non-permanent MĀYĀ-WORLD which is bound by the laws of Karma (Action). If there is fundamentally only one permanent and independent Ātman, both in the Body and in the Cosmos, the questions which necessarily arise, are, what are the difficulties which are experienced by the Ātman in the body, in Realising the Ātman in the Cosmos, and how those difficulties can be overcome; and, in order to solve these questions, it becomes necessary to expound what Names and Forms are; because, as all objects fall into the two classes of the Ātman or Parabrahman, and the Name-d and Form-ed covering on It, nothing else now remains for consideration except the Name-d and Form-ed covering. As this Name-d and Form-ed covering is dense in some cases and thin in other cases, the objects in the visible world fall, according to Vedānta, into the two classes of sacetana (Activated) and acetana (Non- Activated), and even the Activated are again sub-divided into animals, birds, men, gods, gandharvas, and demons etc. There is no place where the Brahman in the shape of Ātman does not exist. It is in the stone, and It is in the human being. But, as there is a difference according to whether a light is put into an iron box, or in a lantern with more or less clean glasses, though it may be one and the same light, so also, although the Ātman-Element is everywhere the same, the different divisions of Activated and Non-Activated arise, as a result of the difference in density of the clothing of Names and Forms in each case. Nay, that is the reason why,

even among the Activated, the power of acquiring Knowledge is not the same in the case of men and beasts. It is true that the Ātman is the same everywhere; yet, as it is fundamentally

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qualityless and apathetic, it cannot by itself do anything, without some Name-d and Form-ed means like the Mind, Reason etc.; and, as these means are not fully available to the Ātman except in the human birth, such birth is considered to be the most superior of all. When the Ātman has got this human birth, this its Name-d and Form-ed clothing falls into the two divisions of Gross and Subtle. According to Vedānta, this gross clothing is the embodiment of the mixture of blood and semen; and whereas, muscles, bones, and nerves grow from the semen, skin, flesh, hair etc. grow from the śoṇita, that is, from the blood; and all this is referred to as the 'annamaya-kośa' (covering made up of food). When we pass this covering and go further inside, we come across Life in the shape of breath, that is, the 'prāṇamaya-kośa'; the Mind, that is, the manomaya-kośa; Reason, that is, the jñānamaya-kośa; and ultimately, the ānandamaya-kośa. The Ātman is beyond all these; and therefore, in the Taittirīyopaniṣad, Varuṇa has acquainted Bhṛgu with the various forms of the Ātman by describing to him the various envelopes (kośa) rising from the annamaya-kośa to the ānandamaya-kośa (Tai. 2.1 – 5; 3.2 – 6). Vedāntists refer to these envelopes (kośa'), except the Gross

Body, such as the Prana- covering etc., together with the subtle organs and the five Fine Elements (Tanmātras) as the 'liṅga' or the 'sūkṣma śarīra' (the Subtle Body). But, instead of explaining the fact of the Ātman taking births in various species of life (yoni) by imagining the existence of diverse 'Bhāvas' of the Reason (See p. 261 above ~Translator.) as is done by the Sāṃkhya, they say that that is the result of Karma-Vipāka, or the fruit of Action. It has been clearly stated in the Gītā, the Upaniṣads, and the Vedānta-Sūtras, that this Karma clings to the support of the Subtle Body, and when the Ātman leaves the Gross Body, this Karma accompanies the Ātman, embodied in the Subtle Body, and compels it to take birth after birth. Therefore, in considering the difficulty which stands in the way of the embodied Ātman attaining the Parabrahman, or obtaining Release, after escaping the cycle of birth and death in the shape of Names and Forms, one has to consider both Karma and the Subtle Body. Out of these, the Subtle Body has been dealt with before, both from the point of view of the Sāṃkhya

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philosophy, as of Vedānta; and, therefore, I shall not repeat the same subject-matter here. In this chapter, I have considered only the nature of that Karma or Action, whereby the Ātman falls into the cycle of birth and death instead of Realising the Brahman, and also how a man has to live in this

world in order that the Ātman should escape that cycle and acquire immortality. Those qualities of Time and Space embodied in Name and Form, as a result of which the fundamental, non- perceptible, and qualityless Parabrahman existing at the commencement of the world, appears in the form of the visible world, are known in Vedānta philosophy as 'Māyā' (Gī. 7.24, 25), and that also includes Karma (Br. 1.6.1). Nay, we may even say that 'Māyā' and 'Karma ' are synonymous; because, unless some Karma or Action has been performed, it is not possible for the Imperceptible to become Perceptible, or for the Qualityless to become Qualityful. Therefore, the Blessed Lord has, after first saying "I take birth in Prakṛti by my Māyā" (Gī. 4.6), defined Karma later on in the eighth chapter of the- Gītā itself, as: "the Action, whereby the variegated Cosmos, such as, the five primordial elements etc. comes into existence out of the imperishable Parabrahman is known as 'Karma' " (Gī. 8.3). Karma has been here used in the comprehensive- meaning of Activity or Action-whether it is performed by a human being or by the other objects in the world, or it is the activity comprised in the Cosmos itself coming into existence. But, whatever Action is taken, its result always is that one Name and Form is changed, and another comes into existence in its place; because, the Fundamental Substance, which is covered by this Name and Form, never changes and always remains the same. For instance, by the Action of weaving, the name 'thread ' disappears, and the same substance gets instead the name of 'cloth'; and by the

Action of a potter, the name 'pot' takes the place of the name 'earth'. Therefore, in defining Māyā, Karma or Action is sometimes not mentioned at all, and only Name and Form are included in Māyā. Yet, when one has to consider Karma by itself, one has to say that the form of Karma is the same as the form of Māyā. Therefore, it is more convenient to make it clear in the very beginning that Māyā, Names and

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Forms, and Karma are fundamentally the same in nature- One can, it is true, make the subtle distinction that MĀYĀ is the common word, and its Appearance has the specific name of Names and Forms, and its Activity, the specific name of KARMA. But, as ordinarily it is not necessary to make this distinction, these three words are very often used synonymously. This clothing (or this upādhi i.e., super-imposed covering) of perishable Māyā on one part of the Parabrahman, which is visible to the eyes, has been described in Sāṃkhya philosophy as the three-constituted Prakṛti. Sāṃkhya philosophers look upon Puruṣa and Prakṛti as two self-created, independent and eternal Elements. But, as Māyā, Names and Forms, or Karma change constantly, it would be logically incorrect to look upon them as of the same standard as the permanent and immutable Parabrahman; because, as the two ideas, 'permanent' and 'non-permanent', are contrary to each other, both of them cannot become applicable at the same



time. Therefore, Vedāntists have come to the conclusion that Perishable Prakṛti or Māyā, in the shape of Karma, is not independent, but that the Appearance of a qualityful Māyā is seen in the one, permanent, all-pervading, and qualityless Parabrahman by the feeble human organs. But, it is not enough to say, that Māyā is not independent, and that one only sees this Appearance in the qualityless Parabrahman. Although, according to Vivartavāda, if not according to the Guṇapariṇāma-vāda, it is possible to see this Appearance of qualityful Names and Forms, that is, of Māyā in the qualityless and eternal Brahman, yet, we are faced with the further question, namely, when, in what order, and why, did this qualityful Appearance, which is seen by human organs, appear in the qualityless Parabrahman? or, to say the same thing in ordinary language, when, and why, did the eternal and thought-formed Parameśvara create the Name-d and Form-ed,. perishable, and gross universe? But, as this subject is unknow- able, not only to human beings, but even to gods, and to the Vedas, as stated in the Nāsadiya-Sūkta in the Ṛg-Veda (Ṛg. 10. 129; Tai. Bra. 2.8. 9) one cannot answer that question better than by saying: "this is an unknowable pastime (līlā) of the qualityless Parabrahman, which has been realised by

Knowledge." (Ve. Sū. 2.1.33). One has to take it for granted that ever since the commencement of things, Name-d and Form-ed perishable Karma, or qualityful Māyā, has been seen side by side with the qualityless Brahman. Therefore, Karma embodied in Māyā has been called eternal in the Vedānta-Sūtras (Ve. Sū. 2. 1. 35 – 37), and even in the Bhagavadgītā, the Blessed Lord has, after saying that Prakṛti is not independent, but "is My Māyā" (Gī. 7.14), said further on that this Prakṛti, that is, Māyā, and Puruṣa are both 'eternal' (Gī. 13.19). In the same way, in describing Māyā, Śaṅkarācārya has said in this Bhāṣya or commentary, that "sarvajñeśvarasyā 'tmabhūte ivā 'vidyākalpite nāmarūpe tattvānyatvābhyām anirvacanīye saṁsāraprapaṇcabījabhūte sarvajñasyeśvarasya 'māyā' 'śaktiḥ' 'prakṛti' iti ca śrutismṛtyor abhilapyete" (Ve. Sū. Śāṁ. Bhā. 2.1.14.), i.e., "the Names and Forms imagined to exist in the fundamental Brahman as a result of the ignorance (of the organs), which are supposed to be of the nature of the Ātman of the All-Scient Parameśvara, but of which, it is not possible to say whether they are different or not-different (tattvānyatva) from the Parameśvara, since they are Gross, and which are the root of the (visible) expansion of gross world, are, in the Śruti and Smṛti texts, called the 'māyā', 'śakti' or 'prakṛti' of the all-knowing Parameśvara"; and "as the subsequent universe seems to have come into existence from the Parameśvara on account of His Māyā, this Māyā, though perishable, is essential and extremely useful for the creation of the visible universe, and it is seen to have been given the names of 'avyakta', '

ākāśa ' and 'akṣara ' in the Upaniṣads" (Ve. Sū. Śām. Bhā, 1.4.3). The Sāṃkhya look upon the Elements, Knowledge-formed (cinmaya) Spirit, and inactive (acetana) Māyā (Prakṛti) as independent and eternal; 'but, it will be seen from the above, that, though Vedāntists admit the eternity of Māyā from one point of view, they do not accept the position that Māyā is self-created and independent; and on that account, in describing the Māyā embodied in worldly life by comparing it to a tree, the Gītā says, "na rūpam asyeha tathopalabhyate nānto na cādir na ca saṃpratiṣṭhā" (Gī. 15.3), i.e., "the FORM, END, BEGINNING, root, or habitation of this tree of worldly life (saṃsāra vṛkṣa) cannot be found". In

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the same way, the descriptions which are come across in the third chapter, such as, "karma brahmodbhavaṃ viddhi" (Gī. 3.15), i.e., "Karma was created out of the Brahman"; or, "yajñāḥ karmasamudbhavaḥ" (Gī. 3.14), i.e., "even the Yajña springs out of Karma"; or, "sahayajñāḥ prajāḥ sṛṣṭvā" (Gī. 3.10), i.e., "the Brahmadeva created prajā (sṛṣṭi) and yajna (Karma) at the same time", mean that, "Karma, or Yajna in the form of Karma, and the sṛṣṭi, that is, prajā (the creation) all came into existence at the same time". Then whether you say that this sṛṣṭi came into existence out of Brahmadeva himself, or, in the words of the Mīmāṃsā school, that it was created by Brahmadeva from the eternal Vedic words, the meaning is the

same (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 231; Manu. 1.21). In short, Karma is the activity which is to be seen in the fundamental qualityless Brahman, at the time when the visible world began to be created. This activity is known as the Name-and Form-ad Māyā, and the activities of the Sun, the Moon, and all the other objects in the world have gradually come into existence from this fundamental Karma (Bṛ. 3.8.9). Scientists have determined by means of their Reason that this, Karma or Māyā, performed at the time of the creation of the universe, which is the foundation of all the activities in the world, is some unknowable pastime (līlā) of the Brahman, and not something independent of the Brahman. [1] But, as the scientists cannot go further, it is not possible for them to ascertain 'when' this wonder, or these Names and Forms, or this Karma embodied in Māyā first came into existence. Therefore, when it is necessary to consider only this Karma-world (karma sṛṣṭi), it is usual in the Vedānta science (Ve. Sū. 2.1.35) to refer to this dependent, perishable Māyā and, at the same time, the Karma which is appurtenant, to it, as 'eternal' (anādi). It must be borne in mind that the word 'anādi' in this place does not mean fundamentally 'without beginning' (nirārambha) and independent, like the

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[1] "What belongs to mere appearance is necessarily sub-ordinated by reason to the nature of the Thing-in-itself " Kant's Metaphysics of Morals (Abbot's trans, in Kant's Theory of Ethics<sup>^</sup>. p. 81). [In one edition, this page is shown as 18 ~Translator.]

Parameśvara, as is maintained by the Sāṃkhya, but 'durjñeyārambha' that is, "something, the beginning of which cannot be known".

But, although we are not in a position to say definitely when and why the Knowledge-formed Brahman first began to take up the Appearance of the visible world, yet, the rules by which the further activities of this Karma in the shape of Māyā go on, are fixed; and many of those rules can be determined by us. The order in which the various Name-d and Form-ed objects in the world came into existence out of the fundamental Prakṛti, that is, out of eternal Karma in the shape of Māyā, has been described by me according to the Sāṃkhya philosophy in the eighth chapter of this book; and I have, in the same place, mentioned the doctrines of modern Material sciences for comparison. It is true that Vedānta does not look upon Prakṛti as self-created like the Parabrahman; but, as the further development of Prakṛti, according to Sāṃkhya philosophy, is acceptable to Vedānta, I will not repeat that subject-matter here. Yet, in the order of the creation of the universe from fundamental Prakṛti in the shape of Karma, which has been described above, I have nowhere considered the ordinary rules according to which man has to suffer the results of Karma (Action). It is, therefore, necessary to consider those rules now. This is known as 'KARMA-VIPĀKA' (effect of Karma). The

first of the rules relating to Karma-Vipāka is that once the Karma is started, its activity or expansion continues without a break; and, though the day and night of Brahmadeva may be over and the universe destroyed, yet, this Karma survives in the form of a seed; and, when the universe begins to come into existence again, fresh sprouts grow out of that seed of Karma. It is stated in the Mahābhārata that:

yeṣāṃ ye yāni karmāṇi prāk sṛṣṭyāṃ pratipedire ।

tāny eva pratipadyante sṛjyatmānāḥ punaḥ punaḥ ॥

(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 231, 48, 49; Gī. 8.18 and 19).

that is, " those very Actions which have been committed by any "being in the previous world, find him again and again (whether lie may will it or no)". Not only is it that "gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ"(Gī. 4.17) – "the effects of Karma are unfathomable" –

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but, even the persistence of Karma is very difficult to get rid of. Nobody has got rid of Karma. The wind blows by Karma. The Sun and the Moon move on account of Karma; and Brahmadeva, Viṣṇu, Sankar, and other qualityful gods also are all tied up in Karma. All the more so, Indra and ethers. Qualityful (saguṇa) means, defined by Name and Form; and being defined by Name and Form means Karma, or the result

of Karma. In as much as it is not possible to say how Karma, in the shape of Māyā, first came into existence. it is also not possible to say when man first got involved in the cycle of Karma. But, once he has got into that cycle, however he may have got into it, he cannot later on, that is, after his Name-d and Form-ed body has been destroyed, escape taking up different Forms in this world as a result of his Actions. Because, as Material scientists have now definitely established, the energy of Karma is never destroyed, and that energy which appears to-day under one Name and Form, reappears under another Name and Form when the former Name and Form has been destroyed; [1] and, if he cannot escape taking up other Names and Forms after one Name and Form has been destroyed, one cannot definitely say that these various subsequent Names and Forms will be lifeless, and that it is not possible for them to be something different. This recurrence of Names and Forms is known as the cycle of births and deaths,

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[1] It is not that this idea of re-incarnation has been accepted only in the Hindu religion or by theists. Although the Buddhists do not believe in the Ātman, yet, they have wholly adopted the theory of re-incarnation into their religion; and, even in the twentieth century, the inveterately atheistic German philosopher Nietzsche, who pronounced that 'God is dead', has accepted the theory of re-incarnation. He has said that he was inspired with the idea or explanation that: as the perpetually recurring transformations of the energy of Karma are limited, and Time is eternal, a Name and Form which has once been created, must occur again; and, therefore, the cycle of Karma is established even from the point of view of the Material sciences. (Nietzsche's *Eternal Recurrence*, Complete works, Engl. Translator. Vol. XVI. pp. 235 – 256).

or saṁsāra, according to the Philosophy of the Absolute Self; and that Energy, which is the foundation

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of these Names and Forms, is synthetically called Brahman, and distributively, Jīvātman. It is stated in the Mahābhārata and in the Manu-Smṛti, that, strictly speaking, this Ātman. neither comes to birth nor dies; that it is eternal, that is, perpetual; but that, as it is involved in the cycle of Karma, one cannot escape taking up another Name and Form, when one Name and Form has been, destroyed; one has to suffer to-morrow for what one does to-day, and day after to-morrow, for what one does to-morrow; nay, one has to suffer in the next birth for what one does in this birth, and in this way the cycle of the universe is continually going on; and that the results of these Actions have to be borne not only by ourselves, but even by the sons, grand-sons, and great-grand-sons, who come to birth out of our Name-d and Form-ed body (Manu. 4. 173; Ma. Bhā, Ā. 80.3). Bhīṣma says to Yudhiṣṭhira in the Śāntiparva that –

pāpaṁ karma kṛtaṁ kimcid yadi tasmin na dṛśyate ।  
nṛpate tasya putreṣu pautreṣv api ca napṛṣu ॥ (Śān.  
129.21)



that is: " King, although a particular man may not be seen to suffer the results of his evil actions, yet, his sons, grandsons and great-grandsons have to suffer them"; and we actually see that some incurable diseases recur hereditarily. In the same way, the fact of one person being born a beggar, and another person being born in the family of a king, has also to be explained by the theory of Karma; and, according to some, this is the proof of the correctness of the theory of Karma. Once this cycle of Karma is started, the Parameśvara Himself does not interfere with it. Seeing that the entire universe is going on by the will of the Parameśvara, who other than the Parameśvara can be the giver of the fruit of our Actions (Ve. Sū. 3.2.38; Kau. 3.8)? And, for this reason, the Blessed Lord has said, "labhate ca tataḥ kāmān mayaiva vihitān hi tāt" (Gī. 7.22), i.e., "the desired result, which is prescribed by Me, is acquired by man". Vedānta, therefore, comes to the ultimate doctrine that though the act of prescribing the result of an Action belongs to the Parameśvara, yet, in as much as these results are fixed according to a man's good or bad Actions,

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that is, according to the worth of his Action, Non-action, or Bad action, the Parameśvara is, strictly speaking, apathetic in this matter; and that, therefore, if there is the distinction of good or bad among men, the Parameśvara does not, on that account, become liable to the blame of partiality (vaiṣamya) or

cruelty (nairghṛṇya), (Ve. Sū, 2. 1. 34); and with reference to this position, it is stated in the Gītā that: "samo 'haṁ sarvabhūteṣu" (Gī. 9.29), i.e., "I am equal towards all", or,

nādatte kasyacit pāpaṁ na caiva sukṛtaṁ vibhuḥ || (Gī. 5.14, 15)

that is: "the Parameśvara does not accept either the sin or the meritorious Action of anybody; the cycle of the inherent effects of Karma or Māyā is continually going on; each created being has to suffer happiness or unhappiness according to its own Actions". In short, although it is not possible for human reason to explain when Karma was first started in the world by the desire of the Parameśvara, or when man first came within the clutches of Karma, yet, in as much as the further consequences or fruits of Karma are found to result according to the laws of Karma, human reason can come to the definite conclusion, that every living being has been caught in the prison of eternal Karma in the shape of Names and Forms, from the very commencement of the world. This is what is meant by the quotation given at the commencement of this chapter, namely, "karmanā badhyate jantuḥ"

The words 'saṁsāra', 'prakṛti', 'māyā', 'visible world', or 'rules or laws of creation' (ṣṛṣṭi) mean the same thing as 'the eternal course of Karma'; because, the laws of creation are the laws which govern the changes which take place in Names and Forms; and, from this point of view, all Material sciences come

under the denomination of Māyā defined by Names and Forms. The rules or limitations of this Māyā are hard and comprehensive; and therefore, even a pure Materialist like Haeckel, who was of the opinion that there is no Fundamental Element which is at the root of or beyond the visible world, has laid down the proposition that a man must go where the cycle of creation drags him. According to this philosopher, the feeling which every man has, that he should

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obtain a release from his perishable Name-d and Form-ed Appearance, or that he will obtain immortality by doing a particular thing, is a mere illusion. Not only are the Ātman or the Paramātman not independent, and not only is immortality a humbug, but, no human being in this world is a free agent to do any particular act. As whatever act a man does to-day is the result of what has been done before by him or by his ancestors, it is also never dependent on his will, whether or not to do a particular thing. For example, a desire to steal nice things belonging to others comes into existence in the hearts of particular persons against their will, as a result of previous Actions or hereditary impressions; and they are inspired to steal that particular thing. In short, these Materialists are of the opinion that the principle mentioned in the Gītā, namely, "anicchann api vārṣṇeya balād iva niyojitaḥ" (Gī. 3.36), i.e., "a man commits sin, although he might not desire to do it",

applies in all places in the same way, that there are no exceptions to it, and that there is no way of escaping it. From this point of view, a desire which a man gets to-day is the result of his Action of yesterday, and the desire he had yesterday was the result of his action of day before yesterday; a man can never do anything by his independent volition, as this chain of causes is endless; whatever happens is the result of former actions or of destiny, because people give the name Destiny to predestined Karma; and, if a man is, in this way, not free to do or not to do a particular Action, it becomes futile to say that he should improve his conduct in a particular way, or that he should, in a particular manner, realise the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman and purify his intelligence. Like a log which has fallen in the stream of a river, one must without demur go wherever Māyā, Prakṛti, the laws of Creation, or the Stream of Karma drags him, whether that is progress or regress. In reply to this, some other evolutionist Materialists say that in as much as the form of Prakṛti is not steady, and Names and Forms continually change, man should watch and find out by what rules of creation these changes take place, and bring about such a change in the external creation as will be beneficial to him; and we see in actual life, that by following this logic,

man utilises fire or electricity for his own benefit. Similarly, it is our experience that human nature can to some extent be altered by effort. But, the question in hand is not whether or not there can be a change in the formation of the universe or in human nature, nor whether or not man should effect such a change; and we have, at the moment, to determine whether or not a man is in a position to control or to yield to the inspiration or desire which he has to bring about such a change. And if, from the point of view of Materialistic philosophy, the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of this desire is pre-destined by the laws of Prakṛti, or of Karma, or of the Creation, according to the principle 'buddhiḥ karmānusāriṇī', then it follows, according to this philosophy, that a man is not free or independent to do or not to do a particular Action. This doctrine is known by the name 'vāsanāsvātantrya' (Freedom of Desire), or 'icchāsvātantrya' (Freedom of Will), or 'pravṛttisvātantrya' (Freedom of Inclination) And if one considers the matter purely from the point of view of the Effects of Karma (karma-vipāka) or of the purely Materialistic philosophy, one has to come to the conclusion that no man has got any kind of freedom of inclination or freedom of will, and that every man is circumscribed in all directions like the unbreakable iron ring fixed on the wheel of a cart. But, if one takes the evidence of his own Conscience in this matter, it will be seen that although one may not possess the power of making the Sun rise in the West, yet, we believe that doing or not doing, after careful consideration, whatever one intends to

do by his own hands, or, where there is one course which is sinful and another which is meritorious, or one course which is righteous and another which is unrighteous, choosing the good or the bad course out of the two, is a thing which is subject to the control of a man's desire. We have now to see whether this belief is right or wrong. If one says that this belief is wrong, then those who commit thefts or murders are judged to be wrong-doers on the basis of this belief, and are' punished accordingly; and, if one says that it is correct, then the Theory of Karma, or the Theory of Karma-Vipāka or the laws of the visible creation fall to the ground. As in the Material sciences,' one has to consider only the actions of

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gross substances, this question does not arise there. But, it acquires importance in the science of Karma-Yoga, which deals with the duty and the non-duty of those who have- acquired Knowledge, and it has to be answered; because, if it is definitely proved that there is no freedom of inclination for man, then the science of right or wrong (vidhiniṣedha-śāstra), which shows how to purify the mind, or explains whether a particular thing should be done or should not be done, or whether a particular thing is righteous or unrighteous,

automatically loses need of consideration (Ve. Sū, 2. 3. 33); [1] and the height of manhood will consist in remaining in the eternal bondage of Mahāmāyā or Prakṛti, whether personally or as a result of heredity. Or, where is there any manhood left at all? Manhood will have to be considered if a person is in a position to control anything at all. What can there be except imprisonment and serfdom where a man has not the smallest authority or will? Like the bullocks tied to a plough, everyone will have to toil under the authority of Prakṛti, and as our poet Shankara says, "the shackles of the inherent qualities of substances" must be perpetually kept by oneself on his feet! The attention of all scholars has been fixed on the question of the Freedom of Will, as a result of Karma-Vāda (Theory of Karma) or Daiva-Vāda (Theory of Destiny) in our country, and of the Theory of Providence in the Christian religion in former years, and of the Theory of the Laws of Nature propounded by Materialistic philosophers in modern times; and any amount of discussion has taken place, and is still taking place on this question. But as it is impossible to deal with the whole of that matter here, I am in this chapter dealing only with what the

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[1] This portion of the Vedānta-Sūtra is named the 'jīvakartṛtvādhikaraṇa', and the first of these Sūtras is 'kartā śāstrārthavatvāt', that is to say, 'in order that the science of right or wrong should have any significance, the Jīva (Personal Self) must be considered as a doer'. When one considers the Sūtra of Pāṇinī (Pa. 1.4.54) that:—"svatantraḥ kartā" (i.e., the doer is independent), the word "kartā" conveys the impression of Freedom of Self; and it will be seen that this adhikaraṇa deals with that question.

idea of the Bhagavadgītā and of Vedānta philosophy on that question is.

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It is true that the course of Karma is eternal, and that even the Parameśvara does not interfere with the course or cycle of Karma which has once been started. But according to our philosophers, the doctrine of Adhyātma (Philosophy of the Absolute Self), that the visible world is not purely Karma or merely Names and Forms, that there is some imperishable independent Ātman-formed Brahman-world which is clothed by these Names and Forms, and that the Ātman within the human body is a particle of that permanent and independent Parabrahman, shows the path for getting out of this seemingly unconquerable difficulty. But, before explaining this path, it is necessary to complete the description of the process of the Effects of Karma, which has remained incomplete. It is not that the rule that one has to suffer according to what one does, applies only to a particular individual. A family, a community, a nation, or even the whole universe cannot escape suffering the consequences of their Actions in the same way as an individual cannot do so; and in as much as every human being is born in some family, some community, or some country, it has to some extent to suffer on account of the Actions not only of itself, but also of the community or society, such as, the family etc. to which it belongs, But, as one has to refer



ordinarily only to the Actions of a particular individual, the divisions of Karma, in the Theory of the Effects of Karma, have been made primarily by reference to a single individual. For instance, Manu has divided the evil actions of a man into bodily (kāyika), vocal (vācika) and mental (mānasika); and of these, prostitution, murder, and theft are called bodily Actions; the four Actions, namely, speaking what is painful, speaking an untruth, speaking what is derogatory, and speaking what is incoherent, are called vocal Actions; and the three Actions, namely, desiring the wealth of another, desiring the evil of another, and false insistence, are said to be mental Actions; and having in this way classified evil Actions or sins into ten kinds (Manu. 12.5 – 7; Ma. Bhā. Anu. 13.), their effects are next enumerated. Yet, this differentiation is not final; because, later on, in this very chapter, Karma has again been divided into sāttvika, rājasa, and tāmasa; and the characteristics of

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these three kinds of qualities (guṇa), or of Karma, which have been given there are primarily the same as those given in the Bhagavadgītā (Gī. 14. 11 – 15; 18. 23 – 25; Manu. 12. 31 – 34) . But, the division of Karma which one commonly comes across in the subject of the Effect of Actions is different from both these divisions; and according to that division, Karma is divided into 'saṁcita' (Accumulated). 'prārabdha' (Commenced), and 'kriyamāṇa' (Being-suffered). Whatever Action has been

performed by a man upto date, whether he has performed it in this birth or in the previous births, is his 'saṁcita', i.e., 'Accumulated' Karma. This saṁcita is also known as 'adṛṣṭa' (invisible), or, in the terminology of the Mīmāṃsā school, 'apūrva' (strange). The reason for this terminology is, that any particular Action is visible only during that particular time when it is being performed; and when that time has gone, it does not any more remain in its actual form, but all that remains is its subtle, that is, invisible, or apūrva, that is, strange effects (Ve. Sū, Śāṁ. Bhā. 3. 2. 39,40). Whatever may be said, the words 'saṁcita', 'adṛṣṭa', or 'apūrva' undoubtedly mean the 'accumulation' of the effects of all the various Actions performed upto the moment of performing the last Action. It is not possible to suffer the effects of all these Accumulated Actions at the same time; because, the consequences of these Accumulated Actions can produce either good or bad, that is, mutually contrary effects. For instance, some Accumulated Actions lead to heaven, whereas others lead to hell; and, the results of all of them cannot possibly be enjoyed at one and the same time, but have to be enjoyed one after the other; and therefore, those out of the 'saṁcita' (Accumulated) Actions, of which the results are first begun to be suffered are known as 'prārabdha' (Commenced Actions), or 'that saṁcita, which has started'. In the Marathi language, the word 'prārabdha' is very often used synonymously with 'saṁcita'; but it will be seen that this meaning is not correct, and that scientifically speaking,

'prārabdha' is only a sub- division of 'saṁcita', which is the total aggregate of Actions. prārabdha is not the whole of saṁcita, but that portion of saṁcita, the effects (kārya) of which, one has begun to suffer for; and, therefore, 'prārabdha' is also called 'ārabdha-kārya'

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(Commenced Action). In addition to Commenced and Accumulated Action, a third division of Karma is ordinarily made, namely, the 'kriyamāṇa'. 'kriyamāṇa' is a derivative participle indicating the present tense, and means 'that Action which is now going on, or which we are now performing'. But, whatever we are now doing is the result of the Commenced Karma, that is to say, of that portion of Accumulated Karma which we have commenced to suffer for. Therefore, I do not see any reason for making the third division, 'kriyamāṇa' (Being-suffered). It is true that one can differentiate between. Commenced and Being-suffered Karma by saying that the Commenced Karma is the cause and the Being-suffered is its effect (phala), that is to say, its product (kārya). But, this distinction is of no use in the process of suffering the results of Actions. Some word is necessary to indicate those Actions, out of the Accumulated Karma, which one has not yet commenced to suffer for, that is to say, which remain over after the Commenced is deducted from the Accumulated. Therefore, in the Vedānta Sūtras (Ve. Sū. 4.1.15), Commenced Karma is

known as 'prārabdha-kārya' , and all the Actions which are not 'prārabdha' are known as 'anārabdha-kārya' (Actions, which one has not yet begun to suffer for). In my opinion, it is scientifically more accurate to divide Accumulated Action (saṁcita-kārya) into prārabdha-kārya and anārabdha-kārya in this way; and therefore, instead of understanding the word 'kriyamāṇa' (Being-suffered) as a derivative participle indicating the present tense, we can look upon it as indicating the future tense on the strength of the Sutra of Pāṇinī: "vartamāna sāmīpye vartamānavadvā" (Pā. 3.3.131), and interpret it as meaning "that, which is to be suffered for, soon in the future"; in this way, kriyamāṇa will mean anārabdha-kārya , and the words prārabdha (Commenced) and kriyamāṇa (To-be-Suffered) will respectively be synonymous with ārabdha-kārya (Commenced Karma) and anārabdha-kārya (Uncommenced Karma) of the Vedānta-Sūtras. But now-a-days, at any rate, no one interprets the word 'kriyamāṇa' in that way; and kriyamāṇa is interpreted as meaning the Actions which are now being suffered for. But, if it is taken in that meaning, not only has one to call the result of prārabdha

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by the name kriyamāṇa, but the interpretation becomes further subject to the serious objection, that none of the words 'saṁcita', 'prārabdha' or 'kriyamāṇa' can be used for showing the anārabdha-kārya . On the other hand, it is also not

proper to disregard the ordinary meaning of the word 'kriyamāṇa'. Therefore, instead of accepting the commonly accepted divisions of Karma in the saṁcita, prārabdha, and kriyamāṇa, in discussing the process of suffering the results of Actions, I divide Karma into ārabdha-kārya (Commenced Karma) and anārabdha-kārya (Uncommenced Karma); and that is also scientifically more convenient. The action of 'suffering' is divided, according to the tense, into 'that which has been suffered' (past), 'that which is now being suffered' (present), and 'that which has still to be suffered' (future). But, in the science of the Effects of Karma, Karma cannot be divided into three divisions in this way. Because, that portion of Accumulated Karma (saṁcita), which is suffered for after having become Commenced Karma (prārabdha), produces results which go again to swell the ranks of Accumulated Karma (saṁcita): and, therefore, in considering the question of the suffering for Actions, it is not necessary to divide saṁcita further than into prārabdha, which means that which one has begun to suffer for, and anārabdha, which means that which one has not yet begun to suffer for. When the effects of all Actions have, in this way, been classified into a two-fold division, the science of the effects of Karma now tells us about the suffering of those effects, that Accumulated Karma is all that has to be suffered for. Out of this, those Actions, the suffering of the effects of which has resulted in one's acquiring the present birth, that is to say, that portion of Accumulated Karma which has become Commenced Karma, cannot be

escaped suffering for – "prārabdhakarmanāṁ bhogād eva kṣayaḥ". In the same way as an arrow, which has left one's hands, cannot come back, but must go on upto its destination, or, as once the wheel of the potter starts to revolve, it will go on revolving until the force of the revolution has been exhausted, so also does prārabdha, that is, that Karma for the results of which one has begun to suffer, go on. Whatever has been started, must come to an end; there is no escape

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from it. But, the same is not the case with the Karma, which is anārabdha-kārya. One can totally annihilate all this kind of Karma by means of Knowledge. As a result of this important difference between the Commenced Karma (prārabdha kārya) and Uncommenced Karma (anārabdha kārya), the scientist has got to patiently wait for a natural death, even after having acquired Knowledge, that is to say, until the Karma, which has started with his body coming to birth, comes to an end. If instead of doing so, he puts an end to his life, then, although he may have destroyed his anārabdha Karma by means of Knowledge, yet, he will have to take another birth for suffering the effects of that prārabdha karma, which made him take the former birth, and the suffering of which has remained incomplete as a result of his perversity in putting an end to his life; and both the Vedānta and the Sāṃkhya philosophy have drawn the conclusion that on that account he will necessarily

not attain Release (Ve. Sū, 4.1.13 – 15 and Sām. Kā, 67), Besides, committing suicide in defiance of these natural laws will be another Karma, which will have been started, and it will be necessary to take another birth to suffer the consequences of that Karma. From this, it will be clear, that from the point of view of the doctrine of Karma, even suicide is a madness.

I have now mentioned the divisions of Karma from the point of view of suffering the Effects of Karma. I shall now consider in what way, that is, by what device one can escape the bonds of Karma. The first of these devices is that prescribed by the supporters of the Karma-Vāda (Doctrine of Karma), 'anārabdha-kārya' has been defined by me above as those Accumulated Actions, for which one has to suffer in the future – whether they can be suffered for in this life or it is necessary to take other births to suffer them. But, disregarding this meaning, some followers of the Mīmāṃsā school have found out a way, easy in their opinion, for obtaining Release. As has been stated before in the third chapter, Karma is divided by the Mīmāṃsā school into nitya (daily), naimittika (occasional), kāmya (desire-prompted), and niṣiddha (forbidden). Out of these, if one fails to perform the daily Actions like saṃdhyā (worship at twilight) etc., one incurs sin; and the

occasional Actions have to be performed whenever the occasion arises. Therefore, according to the Mīmāṃsā school, both these kinds of Actions have to be performed. That leaves the kāmya and the niṣiddha Actions. Out of these, one incurs sin by performing the niṣiddha (forbidden) Actions, and, therefore, they should not be performed; and as, by performing the kāmya (desire-prompted) Actions, one has to take birth after birth to suffer their effects, they too should not be performed.. When a man, in this way, mentally balances the effects of Actions, and gives up some Actions and performs others according to the prescribed rites, he must automatically obtain Release: because,; the prārabdha-karma is exhausted by its being suffered for in this life; and by performing the daily and the occasional Actions and eschewing the forbidden ones in this life, one escapes perdition; and by giving up desire-prompted Actions, there does also not remain the necessity of enjoying heavenly happiness. When the suffering in this world and in hell and in heaven has thus been exhausted, no other state is possible for the Ātman except Release. This doctrine is known as 'karma-mukti' or 'naiṣkarmya-siddhi' (salvation by abstinence from Action). The state in which in spite of performing an Action, one is in the same position as- if one did not perform it, that is to say, in which the doer does not suffer the bondage of the sin or the merit of the Action, is known as the 'naiṣkarmya' state. But, Vedānta philosophy has proved that, one does not fully succeed in naiṣkarmya by this device of the Mīmāṃsā school (Ve. Sū. Śāṃ. Bhā. 4.3.14); and for the



same reason, the Gītā says: "naiṣkarmya does not result from abstinence from Actions, nor does one obtain. Release by giving up Action" (Gī. 3.4). In the first place, it is impossible to eschew all the forbidden Actions, and Ethics itself says that by making a naimittika (occasional) prāyaścitta (self-imposed penance), one does not entirely get rid of the sin of having performed that forbidden Action. Yet, even taking, it for granted that such a thing is possible, the statement of the Mīmāṃsā school that by suffering for the 'prārabdha' Karma, and 1 performing the various performable Actions in the manner mentioned above in this life, or by not performing them, one exhausts accumulation of saṁcita Karma, is itself not correct; because

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if the results of two accumulated Actions are contrary to- each other, e. g., if the effect of one is heavenly happiness, and that of the other, the tortures of hell, then, as it is not possible to suffer both at the same time and at the same place, it is- impossible to exhaust the suffering for the effects of the entire 'saṁcita' Karma by the 'prārabdha' which has been started in this life, and by the Actions which have to be performed in this life. It is stated in the Parāśaragītā in the Bhārata that:—

kadācit sukṛtaṁ tāta kūṭastham iva tiṣṭhati ।

majjamāmsya saṁsāre yāvad duḥkhād vimucyate ||  
(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 390. 17)

that is, "sometimes, the meritorious Actions previously performed by a man wait (to give him their beneficial effects) until he has escaped from the pain of this worldly life"; and the same argument applies to the Accumulated sins. Thus, suffering the effects of Accumulated Karma is not exhausted in one life, and some portion of the Accumulated Karma, always remains over as anārabdha-kārya (Uncommenced Karma); and, even if all Actions in this life are performed in the manner - mentioned above, one still does not escape having to take another birth for suffering the Uncommenced Karma which is part of the Accumulated Karma. Therefore, Vedānta philosophy has come to the conclusion, that this seemingly easy device of the Mīmāṃsā school for obtaining Release, is false and misleading. No Upaniṣad has mentioned this way of escaping the bondage of Karma. This device has been erected merely on the foundation of inference, and this inference does not stand the test till the end. In short, expecting to escape the bondage of Karma merely by performing Karma, is as foolish as expecting a blind man to save another blind man by showing him the right way. Well; if one does not accept this device of the Mīmāṃsā school, and sits idle without performing any Action, expecting thereby to escape the bondage of Karma, that too is not possible; because, not only does the suffering for the Uncommenced Karma remain in balance, but the idea of giving up Karma, as also the act of sitting idle are both

(omasa Actions in themselves, and one cannot escape having to take another birth in order to suffer the effects of

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4these tāmasa Actions, simultaneously with suffering for those of the Uncommenced portion of one's Accumulated Karma (See Gī. 18.7 and 8). Besides, so long as this body is alive, breathing, sleeping, sitting and such other Actions continue; and, therefore, the position of giving up all Actions also becomes untenable; and it has been stated in various places in the Gītā, that no one can even for a single moment escape Karma in this world (See Gī. 3.5; 18.11).

When it has thus been proved, that whether the Action be good or bad, man must always be ready to suffer the effect of it by taking some birth or other; that Karma is eternal and that even the Parameśvara does not interfere with its unbreakable continuity; that it is impossible to give up all Actions; and that one cannot escape the bondage of Karma by performing some Actions and not performing others as advised by the Mīmāṃsā school, the next question which crops up is:— how can one satisfy the natural desire of a human being to escape the cycle of Karma in the shape of perishable Names and Forms, and to go and be merged into the Immortal and imperishable Element, which is at the root of -that cycle. In the Vedas as

also in the Smṛti texts, many devices, such as, sacrifices etc. have been prescribed for obtaining benefit in the life after death. But, from the point of view of the philosophy of Release, all these are of a lower order; because, even if one attains heaven by performing meritorious acts like sacrifices etc., yet, when the benefit of .that meritorious Action is over, one does not escape having to come back again to the land of Action (karmabhūmi ) sometime or other, though it may be after the expiry of a very long period of time (Ma. Bhā. Vana. 259 and 260; Gī. 8. 25 and 9.20) In short, it is quite clear, that this is not the correct path for being merged into the immortal substance and finally and permanently escaping from the troublesome cycle of births .and deaths by escaping the clutches of Karma. According to -the philosophy of the Absolute Self, Jñāna (knowledge) is the only way to permanently escape this troublesome cycle, that is to say, to obtain Release. 'Jñāna' does not mean the knowledge of the ordinary things of life (vyavahāra-jñāna), or the knowledge of the creation defined by Names and Forms,

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but the Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman. This is also known as 'Vidyā, and the word 'vidyā' which has been used in the line "karmaṇā badhyate jantuḥ vidyayā tu pramucyate", i.e., "a man is tied by karma and. released by vidyā", which has been quoted in the beginning of

this chapter, means 'Jñāna' (Knowledge). In the Bhagavadgītā. the Blessed Lord says to Arjuna:—

jñānāgniḥ sarvakarmāṇi bhasmasāt kurute tathā 'rjuna  
I (Gī. 4.37).

that is, "all Karma is reduced to ashes in the fire of Knowledge"; and also in the Mahābhārata, it has been stated in two places, that:—

bijāny agny upadagdhāni na rohanti yathā punaḥ I  
jñānadagdhais tathā kleśair nātmā saṃpadyate punaḥ  
II

(Ma. Bhā. Vana. 199. 106, 107: Śān. 311. 17).

that is, "in the same way as a seed, which has been burnt, will not take root, so also when the suffering (of Karma) has been burnt by Jñāna, it does not have to be suffered for again by the Ātman." In the Upaniṣads also, there are several phrases- which mention the great worth of Jñāna, as follows:—"ya evaṃ vedāhaṃ brahmāsmīti sa idaṃ sarvaṃ bhavati" (Br. 1.4.10),. i.e., "he who realises that he is the Brahman, becomes immortal Brahman"; or, in the same way as water does not adhere to the lotus leaf, so also is that person who- has acquired the Knowledge of the Brahman not defiled- by Karma (Chān. 4.14. 3); or, one who realises the Brahman obtains salvation (Tai. 2. 1); or, he, who has Realised. that everything is saturated by the Ātman, is not at any time affected by sin (Br. 4.4.23); or "jñātvā devaṃ mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ" (Śve. 5.13;

6.13), i.e., "a man escapes from all bonds after he has acquired the knowledge of the Parameśvara "; or " kṣīyante cāśya karmāṇi tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare" (Muṇ. 2.2.8), i.e., "when one has Realised the Parabrahman,. all his Karma is destroyed"; or, "vidyayāmṛtam aśnute" (Īśā. 11;, Maitryu. 7.9), i.e., "by vidyā (Knowledge), immortality is attained"; or "tameva viditvāti mṛtyum eti nānyaḥ panthāḥ vidyate 'yanāya" (Śve. 3.8), i.e., "by Realising the Parameśvara, one acquires immortality; there is no other path for attaining

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"Release." And if we consider the matter scientifically, we become more convinced of the same conclusion. Because, although whatever there is in the visible world is an embodiment of Karma, yet, in as much as that is a pastime of the Parabrahman which is the foundation of the entire universe, no Karma can affect the Parabrahman; and, the Parabrahman though responsible for the doing of all things yet remains un- affected. As has been stated in the beginning of this chapter, all the objects in this world are divided into the two classes, Karma (Māyā) and Brahman, according to the philosophy of the Absolute Self. The only thing which he, who wishes to escape from one of these classes, that is, from Karma, can do, is to go into the other class, namely, into the Brahman; because, there being two fundamental classes of all things, there is no third state, which is free from Karma other

than the Brahman-state. But, in order to achieve this Brahman-state, it is necessary to first properly understand what it is; otherwise, one will go to do one thing and actually do another thing. It will be like "vināyakaṁ prakurvāṇo racayāmāsa vānaram", i.e., "I wanted to make an image of Gaṇapati, but (not succeeding in it) I "have made an image of a monkey." Therefore, it follows logically from the philosophy of the Absolute Self, that the true means of escaping from the bonds of Karma is to acquire a true knowledge of the form of Brahman, that is to say, of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, and of the unattachedness of the Brahman. The same meaning is conveyed by the statement of the Blessed Lord in the Gītā that: "he who realises that Karma does not affect Me, because I am not attached to it, becomes free from the bonds of Karma" (Gī. 4.14 and 13.23). But, it must not be forgotten that the word 'Jñāna' in this place does not mean merely bookish knowledge, or the mere mental process, as has been stated in the very beginning of the Śāṁkarabhāṣya on the Vedānta-Sūtras. 'Jñāna' means 'the state of becoming brahmī-bhūta (merged in the Brahman), or the Brāhmī-state, which a man acquires after having acquired Spiritual Knowledge and conquered his organs.' The whole of this meaning is intended in each place. The 'same definition of Jñāna according to the philosophy of the Absolute Self has

been mentioned at the end of the last chapter; and even in the Mahābhārata (Śān. 320.30), Janaka has said to Sulabhā that:— "jñānena kurute yatnaṁ yatnena prāpyate mahat", i.e., "when a man has acquired Jñāna, which means Jñāna in the form of mental activity, he is inspired to effort; and by this path of effort, he ultimately reaches the Mahat-Element (Parameśvara)". The philosophy of the Absolute Self cannot tell one anything more than what path has to be followed, and where one has to go, in order to attain Release. When philosophy has told one these things, it is for everybody by his own efforts to remove all the thorns or obstacles which there may be in the path prescribed by it, and to clear up the load, and ultimately attain the ideal by that road. But, even this effort may be made in different ways, such as, the Pātanjala-Yoga, Meditation on the Absolute Self, Devotion, or Renunciation of the fruit of Effort etc. (Gī. 12.8 – 12); and on that account, a man is very often confused. Therefore, the Gītā after first mentioning the Desireless Karma-Yoga as the most important of these means, has also described in the sixth chapter the various devices of yama (restraint) – niyama (religious observance) – āsana (pose)– prāṇāyāma (control of breath)– pratyāhāra (withdrawing the organs from the objects of sense) – dhāraṇā /'keeping the mind collected) – dhyāna - (meditation) – samādhi (mental absorption into the object of meditation) etc. which are appurtenant to it; and from the seventh chapter onwards, it is stated how this Realisation of the Parameśvara is acquired, while observing the Karma-Yoga,



by means of meditation on the Absolute Self or by the easier Path of Devotion (Gī. 18.56).

Though it is thus established beyond doubt that Abstention from Action is not the way for escaping the bonds of Karma; that ultimate Release is attained only by keeping the Mind pure, by Realising the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, and by behaving like the Parameśvara; and that the idea of giving up Action is an illusion, because, no one can escape Karma, yet, the fundamental question, whether it is within the control of man to make that effort which has to be made in order to acquire the Knowledge necessary for making this course of Action successful, or whether he must go

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wherever Name-d and Form-ed Prakṛti will drag him, still remains unsolved. The Blessed Lord Himself has said:: "prakṛtiṁ yānti bhūtāni nigrahaḥ kiṁ kariṣyati" (Gī. 3.33), i.e., "what will determination do?; every living being is bound to act according to its inherent tendencies"; and that, "mithyaiṣa vyavasāyas te prakṛtis tvāṁ niyokṣyati", i.e., "your efforts and determination are useless; your Prakṛti (inherent tendencies) will drag you even where you do not want to go" (Gī. 18.59 and 2.60); and even Manu has stated that "balavān indriyagrāmo vidvāṁsam api karṣati" (Manu. 2. 215), i.e., "the

organs are too much even for sciences"; and the sum and substance of the process of Causality (karma-vipāka-prakriyā) is the same; because, once one admits that all the desires in the mind of a man are the result of previous Karma, one has to come to the conclusion that man has to move perpetually from one Karma, to another Karma in the cycle of Destiny. Nay; one may even say that the inspiration to escape Karma, and Karma, itself, are mutually antagonistic. And, if this is true, then one falls into the impossible position (āpatti) than no man is free to acquire Jñāna (Knowledge). To this the answer of the philosophy of the Absolute Self is that, in as much as the Element which is the support of the Name-d and Form-ed visible world also circulates in the gross human body in the form of an Ātman, the Actions of a human being are to be considered from the point of view both of the Body and of the Ātman. Out of these, in as much as the Ātman-formed Brahman is fundamentally one, and only one, it can never be dependent; because, in order that, one should be dependent on another, the distinction of 'one' and 'another' must remain. In the present place, that 'another' is Name-d and Form-ed Karma. But Karma is non-permanent, and is essentially the pastime (līlā) of the Parabrahman; and, therefore, although it acts as a covering over one part of the Parabrahman, it can undoubtedly never enslave the Parabrahman; besides, as I have already stated before, that Ātman which synthesises all the activities in the world of Karma, and gives rise to one's knowledge of the creation, must be different from the Karma-

world, that is to say, it must belong to the Brahman-world, It, therefore, follows that the;

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Parabrahman and the embodied Ātman (śarīra-ātman), which is fundamentally a part of the Parabrahman, are both fundamentally independent, that is to say, that they are both outside the province which is subject to the control of Prakṛti. Out of these two, the Paramātman is eternal and all-pervading, and is always in the pure and released state; and that is all the knowledge which human intelligence can get of it. But, as the Jīvātman (personal Ātman), which is a part of the Paramātman (Supreme Ātman), is caught inside the cage of the Body and Reason and the other organs, though fundamentally it is in a pure and released form, and quality less, and a non-doer, the inspiration which it gives to- the human mind, can be actually perceived by us by personal experience. Although there is no force in free vapour, yet, when it is enclosed in a vessel, it begins to exert a pressure on that vessel. In the same way, when the Gross Body burdened by previous Karma, and the organs, enclose the Jīva (personal Ātman), which is a particle of the Supreme Ātman (Gī. 15.7), the bodily organs acquire the desire and inclination to do those Actions which can liberate it (the Jīva) from this enclosure, (or, which are favorable to Release); and, that is what is known in ordinary parlance as, 'the independent tendencies of the Ātman'. The reason for my

saying in 'ordinary parlance' is that, in its pure released state, or, 'from the philosophical aspect of it', the Ātman is desireless and a non-doer (akartā), and all the activity is of Prakṛti (Gī. 13.29 and Ve. Sū. Śām. Bhā. 2. 3. 40). But, Vedāntins do not with the Sāṃkhya say that this Prakṛti, of its own accord, performs Actions which favour Release; because, if one says so, it follows that gross Prakṛti can blindly release even those who have no Knowledge. And, we cannot also say that, that Ātman which is fundamentally a non-doer, will, of itself, that is to say, without any provocation, and by inherent tendencies, become a doer. Therefore, Vedānta explains the independence of the Ātman by saying, that although the Ātman is fundamentally a non-doer, yet, on account of the provocation, of the enclosure of the body, it, to that extent, becomes apparently a provocator or inspirer; and, when by reason of some cause or other, the Ātman acquires this foreign

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power of provocation, this provocation is distinct from the laws of Karma and independent, 'Independent' (when applied to the Ātman) does not mean 'non-provocative'; and the Ātman in its fundamental, pure state is also not a doer. But, instead of every time giving this lengthy explanation, it is usual to speak of this as the independent tendency, or the inspiration, of the Ātman. This inspiration which is received by the organs through the Ātman as a result of its being enclosed

in an enclosure, and the inspiration which is received by the organs as a result of their contact with the objects in the external world, are two entirely different things. Eat, drink, and make merry are the inspirations of the organs; and the inspiration of the Ātman tells us to perform actions which are favourable to Release. The first kind of inspiration belongs purely to the external world, that is, to the Karma- world; whereas the second inspiration, namely, that of the Ātman pertains to the Brahman-world; and as these two kinds «f inspiration are at the outset mutually contradictory, the greater part of a man's life is spent in the mutual warfare between them. Out of these, when a man does not accept the inspiration from the Karma-world in matters of doubt (Bhāg. 11.10.4), but begins to act according to the independent inspiration of the Ātman – and that is, what is understood by true ātma-jñāna (Spiritual Knowledge), or ātma-niṣṭhā < devotion to the Ātman)– all the Actions which he performs are naturally favourable to Release; and, ultimately

viśuddhadharmā śuddhena buddhena ca sa buddhimān

|

vimalātmā ca bhavati sametya vimalātmanā |

svatantraś ca svatantraṇa svatantratvam avāpnute ||

that is:– "the fundamentally INDEPENDENT embodied Ātman becomes merged in the permanent, pure, knowledgeable (buddha), untarnished, and INDEPENDENT Supreme Ātman" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 308.27 – 30). This is. what is meant by the

statement above that Release is obtained by knowledge. But, on the other hand, when the inherent tendencies of the gross body and organs inspired by Prakṛti, that is to say, the inspirations from the Karma-world become predominant, a man goes to perdition. It is with reference to this independent

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power of the enclosed embodied Ātman to force the body and the organs to perform Actions favourable to Release, and in that way, to obtain Release by the Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, that the Blessed Lord has explained to Arjuna the principle of the independence of the Ātman or of self-dependence, in the following words . –

uddhared ātmanātmānaṁ nātmānam avasādayet ।

ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ ॥

(Gī. 6.5)

that is, "man must obtain his Release himself; he should not allow himself to be discouraged by anything; because (each one) one is one's own brother (benefactor), as also one's own enemy (destroyer)". And, it is with the same idea that the Yoga-Vaśiṣṭha has deprecated Destiny, and with great detail extolled the eminence of manhood (Yo. 2. sarga. 4 – 8). When a man acts in this way, realising the principle that there is only one Ātman in all created things, his conduct is described as

sadācaraṇa (meritorious Action), or Action favourable to Release; and, as it is the independent nature of the Jīvātman to inspire the body and the organs towards Action of this kind, the conscience of the evil-doer always bears testimony in favour of meritorious Action; and, therefore, even evil-doers repent of their evil deeds. Intuitionists refer to this matter as the independent inspiration of a deity in the form of Conscience, but considering the matter from the scientific point of view, Reason cannot possibly escape the bonds of Karma, as it is an evolute of Gross Matter; and it is clear, that this inspiration must come from the Ātman which is outside the Karma-world. In the same way, the expression 'Freedom of Will' used by Western scholars is not correct from the point of view of Vedānta philosophy; because, as Desire or Will is an inherent tendency of the Mind, and as Reason, and along with Reason, the Mind, are, as stated in the eighth chapter, also the un-self-intelligible evolutes of Gross Matter in the shape of Karma, it (the Mind) cannot by itself escape the bondage of Karma. Therefore, Vedānta philosophy has laid down that true independence is not of the Mind, nor of the Reason, but of the Ātman. It is not necessary for anybody

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to give this independence to the Ātman, nor can anyone 1  
deprive the Ātman of it. When the particle of the independent.  
Supreme Ātman gets caught within an enclosure, it, of itself,

and independently, gives an inspiration to the Mind and to the Reason in manner mentioned above. If anyone disregards these inspirations of the internal organs (antaḥkaraṇa), we must with the Saint Tukārāma say:—

Who has thereby lost anything?

one has oneself done harm to oneself || (Gā. 4448)

The same principle has been referred to in the Gītā in the words "na hinasty ātman ātmānam", i.e., "he who does not ruin himself, obtains the highest salvation"; and the same principle- has again been clearly repeated in the Dāsabodha (Gī. 13. 28; Dāsa. 17. 7- 7 – 10). The fact that a man naturally feels that, he can do a particular thing independently, notwithstanding that he is tied down hand and foot by the laws of an apparently inpregnable Karma-world, cannot be explained in any way as satisfactorily as by concluding, as stated above, that the Brahman-world is different from the Gross Material world.. Therefore, that man who does not accept as correct the science of the Absolute Self, must either accept the position of the eternal slavery of mankind in this matter, or he must give up the question of the independence of inherent tendencies as unsolvable. I have explained the independence of inherent tendencies, or Freedom of Will, on the basis of the proposition of Non-Dualistic Vedānta, that the Jīvātman (personal Ātman) and the Paramātman (Supreme Ātman) are fundamentally uniform (Ve. Sū. Śāṁ. Bhā, 2. 40). But for those who do not accept this Non-Dualistic doctrine, or when Dualism has to- be accepted in order to justify the Path



of Devotion, it is said that this power of the Jīvātman is not its own power, but is received by it from the Parameśvara. But, in any case, it is always said that in order to acquire this power, the Jīvātman must first make the necessary effort, having regard to the- principle enunciated in the Ṛg-Veda, that "na ṛte śrāntasya sakhyāya devāḥ" (Ṛg. 4. 33. 11), i.e., "the gods do not help anyone except the man who makes effort, until he is tired"; and

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the principle of personal effort, and inferential!? the principle of the Freedom of the Ātman, is left intact (Ve. Sū. 2.3.41, 42; Gī. 10.5 and 10). Nay, the Buddhists do not accept the theory of the Ātman, or of the Parabrahman; hut though they do not accept the theory of the Realisation of the Brahman or of the Ātman, their religious treatises contain the advice that "attanā (ātmānā) codayattānam" , i.e., "one must put oneself into the right path"; and in support of that doctrine, it is said that:

attā (ātmā) hi attano nātho attā hi attano gati |  
tasmā sañjamaya 'ttāṇaṃ assaṃ (aśvaṃ) bhaddaṃ va  
vāṇijo || (Dhammapada, 380).

that is, "one is the owner of oneself, and there is no other redeemer for oneself except one's Ātman; therefore, just as a merchant keeps under proper control his good horse, so must

one keep oneself under proper control"; and the importance and the existence of the freedom of the Ātman is there shown in the same way as in the Gītā. (See, Mahāparinibbāṇa-sutta, 2.33 – 35). The French Materialist Comte must also be included in this class; because, although he does not accept the theory of the Absolute Self, yet, he has, as a matter of personal experience, that is to say, without any logical justification accepted the fact that every person can by his own efforts improve his conduct and his circumstances.

Although, it has in this way been proved that (i) the Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman is the most successful method for escaping the bonds of Karma, and acquiring the metaphysically perfect state of Realising that there is only one Ātman in all created beings, and that (ii) it is within the control of everybody to acquire that Realisation, yet, we must also remember the second fact, that .even this independent Ātman cannot get rid of this mill-stone of Prakṛti round its neck in a moment. As, though an artisan is very skilful himself, he cannot do anything without implements, and he has to spend some time in repairing the implements, if they are not in proper condition, so also is the case with the personal Self. It is true that the personal Self is free to give to the organs the inspiration to acquire Knowledge; yet, scientifically, it is fundamentally quality less and isolated, or, as

stated above in the seventh chapter, it has eyes, hut is lame (Maitryu. 3. 2, 3; Gī. 13. 20); and therefore, it does not possess the implements which are necessary (e. g., the wheel, to a potter etc.) for doing a particular Action according to a particular inspiration. The Body, the Reason, and the other organs are evolutes of Matter. Therefore, the personal Self has got to bring about its own Release, through the medium of the bodily organs etc., which it has got according to its Commenced Action (prārabdha-karma). As the Reason is the most important organ among the bodily organs, the personal Self (Jīvātman) has to first inspire the Reason, if it has to get anything done by any of the organs. But, having regard to one's inherent tendencies, which depend on previous Action, it is not certain that this Reason will always be pure and sāttvika. And there, fore, in order that this Reason should be released from the meshes of three-constituted Matter, and become introspective- sāttvika, and Self -devoted (ātmaniṣṭha), that is, such as will listen to the dictates inspired by the Self, and decide to perform only such Actions as are beneficial to the Self, one has to practise Renunciation (vairāgya) for a considerable length of time. Even then, hunger, thirst, and other corporeal needs and those Accumulated (saṁcita) Actions, for the consequences of which one has begun to suffer, do not in any case leave one till death. Therefore, although the Ātman is free to give to the corporeal organs the inspiration to perform Actions favourable to Release, yet, as all

the subsequent Actions have to be performed through Matter, as a result of the superimposition of a corporeal body on the Ātman, it (the Ātman) is, to that extent, dependent, like a carpenter, a potter, or other artisans; and, it has first to purify its implements, namely, the corporeal organs etc., and to keep them under its control (Ve. Sū. 2.3.40). This thing cannot be achieved at once, and has to be acquired gradually and courageously; otherwise, the organs will positively rear up on their haunches like a frightened horse. Therefore, the Blessed Lord has said that Reason needs the help of courage (dhṛti) for acquiring control over the organs (Gī. 6.25); and later on in the eighteenth chapter, dhṛti has, in the same way as Reason, been divided into the sāttvika, rājasa and tāmasa classes (Gī. 18.33 – 35).

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Out of these, one has to discard the rājasa and tāmasa stages, and to control the organs in order to make one's Reason sāttvika. Therefore, the place, method of sitting, and the food, proper for the performance of this Yoga in the form of practising control over the organs, have been described in the sixth chapter of the Gītā. And, it is further stated in the Gītā that when practice has been performed in this way "śanaiḥ, śanaiḥ" (Gī. 6.25), i.e., gradually, the Mind (citta) becomes steady, and the organs come under one's control; and thereafter, after the lapse of a considerable length of time (not

at once), one realises the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman; and by the acquisition of Knowledge, the bondage of Karma is broken: "ātmavantam na karmāṇi nibadhnanti dhanañjaya", i.e., "such a person who has realised the Ātman, cannot be bound by Karma (Gī. 4.38 – 41). But, because the Blessed Lord has prescribed the practice of Yoga in solitude (Gī. 6.10), one must not understand the import of the Gītā as being that one should give up all the activities in the world, and spend one's life in the practice of Yoga. Just as a merchant starts business with what little capital he has, and gradually acquires vast wealth by such business, so also is the case of the practice of Karma-Yoga prescribed in the Gītā. This Karma-Yoga has got to be started by exercising as much control over the organs as is possible, and thereby, gradually, more and more of control over the organs is acquired. At the same time, it is also not proper to always sit in a gossiping place; because, thereby the habit of concentration, which has been acquired by the Mind, is likely to weaken. Therefore, when one is continually practising Karma- Yoga, it is necessary to spend some time every day or at intervals in solitude (Gī. 13.10). But, the Blessed Lord nowhere says, that for that purpose one should give up one's ordinary activities in life. On the other hand, this control of the organs has been prescribed in order that one should be able to perform one's activities in life with a desireless frame of mind, and the advice of the Gītā is, that while control of the organs is being practised, one must simultaneously, continually, and according to one's own

abilities, practise the desireless Karma-Yoga, and not wait till one has acquired complete control over the organs.

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According to the Maitryupaniṣad and the Mahābhārata, one «an acquire equability of Reason within six months, if one is intelligent and determined (Maitryu. 6. 28; Ma. Bhā. Śān. 239. 32; Aśva. Anugītā. 19.66). But, a doubt is likely to be raised here, that this sāttvika, equable, and Self-devoted frame of the Mind, which has been described by the Blessed Lord, may not be acquired by some, as a result of their inherent nature, even in six years, to say nothing of six months; and that, if this practice remains incomplete, not only will perfection or Release not be reached in this life, but the practice will have to be started from its very commencement in the next birth; and, if the practice in this next birth also remains incomplete, as in the previous births, such a person will never acquire perfection. And, on that account, it is also likely to be believed that one must learn to acquire the non-subjective and non-objective mental absorption (nirvikalpa-samādhi [1]) by practising the Pātañjala Yoga before starting the practice of

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[1] 'nirvikalpa-samādhi' is defined in Apte's Sanskrit dictionary as: "an exclusive contemplation upon the one entity without the distinction and separate consciousness of the Knower, the Known and the Knowing, and without even self-consciousness" (Apte, 3rd Edition, 1924) ~ Translator.

the Karma-Yoga. Arjuna was beset by this very doubt, and he has in the sixth chapter of the Gītā (Gī. 6. 37 – 39) asked Śrī Kṛṣṇa, what a man should do in these circumstances. To this question, the Blessed Lord has replied that, as the Ātman is immortal, the impressions received by it in this life through the Subtle Body, whatever they may be, are not destroyed; and that such a 'yogabhraṣṭa' (apostate from Yoga), that is, one who has abandoned the Karma-Yoga without having completely acquired it, starts his efforts in the next birth from the point where he has left off in this birth; and that, in this way, gradually "anekajanmasaṁsiddhas tato yāti param gatim" (Gī. 6.45), i.e., "he ultimately acquires perfection after many births, and obtains Release". The statement in the second chapter that "svalpam apy asya dharmasya trāyate mahato bhayāt" (Gī. 2.40), i.e., "even a little practice of this method, that is, of the Karma-Yoga, redeems a person from great danger", is with reference to this proposition. In short, although the

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Ātman of a person is fundamentally independent, yet, as a result of the impure inherent nature of the Body, which a person has acquired as a result of his previous Actions, it is not possible for him to acquire complete Release in one life. But on that account, "nātmānam avamanyeta pūrvābhir asaṁṛddhibhiḥ" (Manu. 4.137), i.e. "no one should despair,

nor should one waste one's whole life in practising the Pātañjala-Yoga, that is, the mere gymnastic exercise of the organs, by a foolish insistence that one will acquire complete Release in one life". The Blessed Lord has said in the Gītā, that there is no haste where the Ātman is concerned; that, one should acquire as much Yogic strength as can possibly be acquired in this life, and .start the practice of Karma-Yoga; that thereby, the Mind gradually becomes more and more sāttvika, and pure; that, not only this small practice of the Karma-Yoga, but even the mere desire to practise it, will forcibly push forward a man as if he had been put into a grinding mill, and ultimately cause the complete merger of the Ātman into the Brahman, if not to-day, to-morrow, and in the next birth, if not in this birth; that, therefore, even the smallest practice of the Karma-Yoga, or even the desire to practice it, is never wasted; and that this is the most important characteristic feature of the Karma-Yoga (See my Commentary on Gī. 6.15.). One must not restrict one's attention to this life, and give up coinage, but should continue one's practice of performing desireless Action, independently, courageously, and according to one's own abilities. This bondage of Matter which one considers to be indissoluble in this life or to-day, as a result of pre-destination (prāktana-saṁskāra) will become gradually and automatically loose, by the gradually increasing practice of Karma-Yoga; and when this goes on for some time, "bahūnām janmanām ante jñānavān mām prapadyate" (Gī. 7.19), – sometime or other as a result of the complete acquisition of Knowledge, the



bondage of or the dependence on Matter is broken, and the Ātman at last acquires its fundamental or perfect qualityless free state, or Release. What is impossible for a man? The well-known proverb, 'if a man performs the proper duties of manhood, he will become the same as the Nārāyaṇa', is only a repetition of this proposition of Vedānta; and, it is on this

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very account that the writer of the Yoga-Vaśiṣṭha has, in the chapter dealing with those who desire Release (mumukṣu), praised the worth of Effort, and laid down the firm proposition, that by Effort everything is ultimately achieved (Yo. 2.4.10 – 18)., Although it has in this way been definitely proved, that the personal Self is fundamentally free to make the effort of acquiring Knowledge, and that by ceaseless effort based on self-dependence, it, sometime or other, escapes from the clutches of pre-destined (prāktana) Karma, yet, it remains to give some' further explanation as to what is meant by the annihilation of Karma (karma-kṣaya), and when it takes place, 'karma-kṣaya' means the total, that is, the balanceless release from the bonds of Karma. But, as has been stated before, though a man may have acquired Knowledge, yet, in as much as he does not escape Karma (Action) in the form of drinking, eating, sleeping, sitting, etc. so long as his body lives, and, in as much as his Commenced (prārabdha) Karma is not annihilated' otherwise than by suffering, he cannot determine

to destroy his body by suicide. Therefore, although all the Karma done before the acquisition of Knowledge is annihilated by the acquisition of Knowledge, yet, the scient has to perform some Karma or other, so long as he is alive, even after the acquisition of Knowledge. Then, how is he to be released from this- Karma?; and, if there is no such Release, there is no-annihilation of the previous Karma, nor is there any Release (mokṣa) later on. The answer of Vedānta philosophy to this doubt is, that although Karma, in the shape of Names and' Forms, does not at any time leave the Name-d and Form-ed body of a scient, yet, in as much as the Ātman is competent to adopt or reject such Karma, a man can, by conquering his organs and destroying the Attachment, which exists in the case of every living being towards the Karma, so to say, kill the sting of Karma, though he may be performing it. Karma is inherently blind, lifeless (acetana), and dead. It does not by itself either catch hold of or leave anybody; inherently, it is neither good nor bad. But, a man, by allowing his Self to get entangled in this Karma, gives it the character of good or bad, beneficial or malefic, by his Attachment (āśakti). Therefore, when this; Attachment in the shape of a feeling of mine-ness (mamatva)

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comes to an. end, the bondage of Karma may be said to be broken; then let that Karma remain or not remain. On the basis of this proposition, it is stated in the Gītā in several

places that: true abstention from Action (naiṣkarmya) consists in this, and not in the abandonment of Action (Gī. 3.4); your jurisdiction extends to the performance of Action, you cannot control getting or not getting the fruit of the Action (Gī. 2.47); "karmaidriyaiḥ karmayogam asaktaḥ" (Gī. 3.7), i.e., "let the organs of Action perform their various Actions without entertaining any hope for the fruit"; "tyaktvā karmaphalāsaṅgam" (Gī. 4.20), i.e., "having given up the fruit of Action"; "sarvabhūtātmarshātātmarshā kurvann api na lipiyate" (Gī. 5.7), i.e., "that man, whose mind has become equable towards all created things, is not bound by Actions, though he may perform them"; "sarvakarmaphalatyaṅgam kuru" (Gī. 12.11), i.e., "give up the fruit of all Actions"; "kāryam ity eva yat karma niyataṁ kriyate" (Gī. 18.9), i.e., "those who perform whatever Action befalls them, looking upon it as a duty, are sāttvika"; "cetasā sarvakarmāṇi mayi samnyasya" (Gī. 18.57), i.e., "dedicate all Actions to Me when you act". The question whether or not the scientist should perform all Actions which arise in life, is an independent question; and the doctrine of the Gītā on that point will be considered in the next chapter. We have, for the present, to consider only what is the real meaning of the dictum that all Karma is reduced to ashes by Jñāna; and from the quotations from the Gītā which have been given above, the opinion of the Gītā, on this question becomes quite clear. We apply this logical argument everywhere in ordinary life. For instance, if a person unintentionally gives a push to another person, we- do not call him a rowdy; and,

even under the criminal law, death caused by mere accident is not looked upon as murder. If fire burns a house, or a deluge washes away a field, does one consider the fire or the rain as criminals? If one considers only Action by itself, there will be found in every act some or other fault, defect, or evil, from the point of view of the human being; because, "sarvārambhā hi doṣeṇa dhūmenāgnir ivāvṛtāḥ" (Gī. 18.48), i.e., "just as fire is enveloped in smoke, so also is all Action (ārambha) enveloped in some fault or other". But the fault which the Gītā advises one to

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give up, is not this fault. The Gītā, has laid down that the evil or virtue, which we ascribe to any particular Action of a man, does not lie in the Action itself, but depends on the frame of mind of the man who does it; and, from this point of view, eliminating the evilness from an Action, means the doer of the Action keeping his Reason or Mind pure (Gī. 2.49 – 51); and, even in the Upaniṣads, importance is attached to the Reason of the person who performs the Action, as follows:

nana eva manuṣyāṇāṁ kāraṇaṁ bandhamokṣayoḥ ।  
bandhāya viṣayāsaṅgi mokṣe nirviṣayaṁ smṛtaṁ ॥  
(Maitryu. 6. 34; Amṛtabindu. 2)

that is: "the mind of a man is the only (eva) cause for his being bound (by Karma) or being Released; when the mind is enslaved by objects of pleasure, it is bound; and when it goes beyond those objects (becomes nirviṣaya), that is, when it becomes desireless (niṣkāma), or unattached (niḥsaṅga), that is Release". The Bhagavadgītā has principally stated in what way one can acquire this equability of the mind by the Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman; and when this state of mind has been acquired, Action is totally destroyed, notwithstanding that it is performed. Karma is not destroyed by becoming homeless (niragni), that is, by Renunciation (saṁnyāsa), and by giving up sacrificial ritual to fire etc.; nor by remaining Actionless (akriya), that is, by remaining idle without performing any Action whatsoever (Gī. 6.1). Whether a man desires it or no, the wheel of Matter will go on; and, therefore, man must also move round and round with it (Gī. 3.33; 18.60). But, that man, who does not dance as a dependent on Matter like an ignorant person, but keeps his mind steady and pure by control of the organs and performs all Action, which befalls him in the ordinary course of life, as a duty merely, and calmly, and without allowing his mind to become attached, is the true emotionless (virakta) man, the true Steady-in-Mind (sthitaprajña), and one, who may be said to be truly merged in the Brahman {Gī. 3.7; 4.21; 5.7 – 9; 18.11.}. A scientist may perhaps renounce the world, and give up the Action of ordinary life, and go and

sit in a forest; but it is wrong to imagine that by his having, in this way, abandoned the duties of ordinary life, he has annihilated them (Gī. 3.4). One must bear in mind the principle that whether he performs Actions or not, the annihilation of his Karma is the result of his having attained equability of mind, and not of his having abandoned, or of his not performing, Action. For explaining the true nature of the annihilation of Karma, the illustration given in the Upaniṣads and in the Gītā (Chān. 4.14.3; Gī. 5.10), that the scient, that is, one who performs Actions by dedicating them to the Brahman, or without Attachment, is not touched by Karma, in the same way as water being on the leaf of the lotus flower does not adhere to it, is more appropriate, than the illustration that Karma is burnt by Knowledge, in the same way as fuel is burnt by fire. Karma is essentially never burnt, nor is it at all necessary to burn it. If Karma is Name and Form, and if Name and Form means the visible world, then how is this visible world to be burnt up?; and, assuming for the sake of argument that it is burnt, then, according to the theory of Satkārya-vāda, the utmost that can happen, is that its Name and Form will be changed. As Name-d and Form-ed Karma or Māyā changes eternally, man cannot totally destroy this Name-d and Form-ed Karma, however much of a Self-knower he may become, though he may, as he wills, bring about a change in the Name and Form; and such a thing can be done only by the

Parameśvara (Ve. Sū, 4. 4. 17). But, the seed of goodness or evilness, which did not exist inherently in this gross Karma, and which a man instills into it by his feeling of mine-ness, can be destroyed by him; and what has to be burnt up by him, is this seed. That man alone who has burnt this seed of mine-ness in his ordinary activities, by maintaining an equable frame of mind towards all created things, is the Blessed, the Accomplished (kṛtakṛtya), and the Released; and his Karma is said to have been burnt by the fire of Knowledge, though he may be performing all Actions (Gī. 4.19; 18.56). In as much as the being burnt up of Karma in this way is entirely dependent on the Mind being free from objects of pleasure, and on the Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, no time is lost in

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such Realisation performing its function of destroying Karma, in the same way as fire begins to exercise its function of burning, the moment it comes into existence. The moment Realisation comes, Karma is immediately destroyed. Nevertheless, the moment of death is considered to be more important than all other times in this matter, because death is the last moment in a man's life; and, though the Uncommenced Accumulated Karma may have been destroyed by previous Realisation, yet the Commenced (prārabdha) Karma is not destroyed. Therefore, if this Realisation of the

Brahman does not continue till the end, the good or bad Actions which may have been performed in the meantime as a result of Commenced Karma, will become desireful (sakāma), and one will not be able to escape having to take a fresh birth to suffer their consequences. It is true that that man who has become really Released from birth (jīvanmukta) is not subject to this fear. But, when one is considering this subject-matter scientifically, one has also to consider the possibility that the Knowledge of the Brahman, which has been acquired before death, may not continue till the end. Therefore, philosophers consider the exact moment of death as of greater importance than the time before death; and they say that the Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman must necessarily take place at that moment, that is, at the moment of death; and that other- wise Release is not possible. On the basis of this theory the Gītā, on the authority of the Upaniṣads, states that: "by remembering Me at the moment of death, and Realising that there is no other than I, the man is Released" (Gī. 8.5). According to this proposition it follows that, any man, who has spent the whole of his life in evil deeds, will become Released by Realising the Parameśvara at the moment of death, which, according to some, is not correct; but, if one considers the matter carefully, it will be seen that there is nothing wrong in it. The man who has spent the whole of his life in evil deeds cannot acquire purity of mind, and Realise the Brahman at the moment of death. As in all other matters, it is necessary to acquire the habit of devoting the Mind to the



Brahman; and, it will be very difficult, nay impossible, for the man who has not even once

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in his lifetime Realised the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, to get that experience suddenly at the moment of death. Therefore, the second important teaching of the Gītā in this matter is, that everyone should continually carry on the practice of abstracting his mind from the objects of pleasure, so that there is no difficulty in that state of mind being present at the moment of death, and the man being thereby ultimately Released (Gī. 8.6, 7 and 2.72). But, for critically examining this philosophical doctrine, let us suppose that someone, as a result of the impressions of previous lives, Realises the Paramēśvara suddenly only at the moment of death. No doubt, the case of such a man will be perhaps one in a hundred thousand, nay, one in a million; but, we have to disregard the fact that such a case is difficult to come across, and to consider for the present what will happen if .such a case actually takes place. As Realisation has come to such a man, though only at the moment of death, the Uncommenced Karma of such a man is destroyed, and the Commenced Karma comes to an end at the moment of death by its having been suffered for in this life. Therefore, such a man has no Karma left which has to be suffered for; and, it then necessarily follows, that he becomes free from all Karma, that is, from the

cycle of life (saṃsāra). This proposition has been expounded in the Gītā, in the stanza: "api cet sudurācāro bhajate mām ananyabhāk" , i.e., "even a great evil-doer will be released, if he worships the Parameśvara with the idea that there is no one else to worship"; and it has been accepted even by the other religions of the world. It may be borne in mind that the word 'ananyabhāva' signifies the state of mind of a person, whose mind is fully merged in the Parameśvara, and the person who simply utters the words "Rāma, Rāma" by the mouth, while his mind is engaged somewhere else, is not meant. In short the importance of the Realisation of the Parameśvara is such that the moment it comes, all the Uncommenced Accumulated Karma is destroyed at a stroke. Whenever this state of Mind comes, it is welcome; but our philosophers have concluded that it is essential that such a state should continue in existence at the moment of death, or, if one has not acquired that Realisation before death, that one

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should acquire it at least at the moment of death; otherwise, some desire or other will remain in balance at that moment, and re-birth will not be averted; and if re-birth is not averted, Release (mokṣa) also becomes impossible.

We have so far dealt with the questions, what the bondage of Karma is; what is meant by the destruction of Karma; and how that is brought about, and when. Now, I will shortly consider the state in which those persons who have not escaped the bondage of Karma, and destroyed the consequences of Karma find themselves after death, according to the Vedic religion, and close this chapter. This question has been dealt with at great length in the Upaniṣads (See Chān. 4.15; 5.10; Br. 6.2.2. 16; Kau. 1.2.3). And all these Upaniṣads have been harmonised in the third pāda of the fourth chapter of the Vedānta-Sūtras. But, it is not necessary to go into the whole of that discussion here, and we have only to consider the two courses which are mentioned in the Bhagavadgītā (Gī. 8.23 – 27). The Vedic religion is divided into two well-known divisions, Karma-kāṇḍa and Jñāna-kāṇḍa. The original meaning of the Karma-kāṇḍa out of these, is the worship of the Sun, Fire, Indra, Varuṇa, Rudra and other Vedic deities by sacrificial ritual, and obtaining children and grand-children, and cows, horses, or other wealth in this life, and a happy state after death by the grace of those deities. As at the present day, this sacrificial ritual of the Śrutis has more or less ceased to exist, people devote themselves to the worship of God, and to the meritorious Actions, like charity etc., enjoined by the Śāstras, in order to achieve this object. But, it is clear from the Ṛg-Veda that in ancient times, people used to worship these deities by sacrificial ritual not only for personal benefit, but also for the benefit of the community; because, the Sūktas in the Ṛg-Veda

are full of praise of the deities Indra etc., whose favour had to be acquired for these purposes; and everywhere we come across prayers like "O God! give us children and wealth"; "make us live a hundred years"; "do not kill us, or our children or our warriors, or our cattle". [1] As these ritualistic practices

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are common to the three Vedas, this course of worship was known in ancient times as 'trayī dharma; and there is a detailed description in the Brahmanas as to the way in which they are to be performed. But, as the ritual prescribed for these various sacrifices was different in the different Brahmanas, doubts arose as to which one was correct. Therefore, Jaiminī has made a collection of explanatory rules for bringing about harmony between these mutually contradictory ritualistic directions. The rules laid down by Jaiminī are known as 'Mīmāṃsā-Sūtras' or the 'Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā'; and, therefore, the ancient Karma-kāṇḍa came later on to acquire the name of the 'Mīmāṃsaka-mārga'; and, as that name is still in vogue v I have made use of it on various

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[1] These prayers are to be come across in many places but instead of mentioning all of them, I will only mention the prayer which is come across in every day worship, namely, "mā nastoke tanaye mā na āyau ma no goṣu ma no aśveṣu rīriṣaḥ | vīrān mā no rudra bhāmito vadhīr haviṣmantāḥ sadamittvā havāmahe || (Ṛg. 1.114.8)

occasions in this book. But, it must be remembered that though the word 'mīmāṃsā' came into vogue only in later times, this Karma-mārga of sacrificial ritual has been current from very ancient times. The word 'mīmāṃsā' occurs nowhere in the Gītā, and that is why we find in it the words 'trayī dharma' (Gī. 9.20 – 21), or, 'trayī-vidyā' instead, Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣads are Vedic treatises, later in point of time than the Brahmanas, which describe the sacrificial ritual laid down by the Śrūtis. As these treatises maintain that sacrificial ritual is inferior, and that the Knowledge of the Brahman is superior, the religion described in these later works is known as 'Jñāna-kāṇḍa'. Yet, as the different Upaniṣads contain different ideas, it was also necessary to harmonise them. This has been done by Bādarāyaṇācārya in his Vedānta-Sūtras, which are also known as the Brahma-Sūtras, or the Śārīra-Sūtras or the Uttara-Mīmāṃsā. In this way, the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā and the Uttara-Mīmāṃsā are at present the two treatises which deal with the Karma-kāṇḍa and the Jñāna-kāṇḍa' respectively. Strictly speaking, both these works fundamentally discuss the meanings of Vedic expressions, that is to say, of the Mīmāṃsā; yet, it is usual to refer to the followers of the Karma-kāṇḍa as 'Mīmāṃsakas', and to the followers of the Jñāna-kāṇḍa as 'Vedāntins'. The followers of the Karma- kāṇḍa! that is to say, the Mīmāṃsakas say that the observance

of the four months, and of the sacrificial ritual, such as, the Jyotiṣṭoma-yajña, etc. are the important doctrines of the Śruti religion; and that according to the Vedas, he alone will acquire Release who performs that Karma, Whoever he may be, he must not give up this sacrificial Karma; and if he does so, he must be taken to have abandoned the Śruti religion; because, the Vedic sacrificial ritual was created at the same time as the Universe, and the virtuous circle of men performing it and pleasing the deities, and the deities in return producing rain and the other things needed by men, has been going on from times immemorial. At present, we do not attach much importance to these ideas, because the Śruti religion of sacrificial ritual is not now in vogue. But, as the state of things was different at the time of the Gītā, the importance of this circle of sacrifice has been described as above in the Bhagavadgītā (Gī. 3.16 – 25). Nevertheless, it becomes clear from the Gītā, that as a result of the Knowledge conveyed in the Upaniṣads this Karma ritual had even then acquired an inferior place from the point of view of Release (2.41 – 46); and this inferiority has increased later on by the growth of the doctrine of non-sacrifice (ahimsā). It is clearly mentioned in the Bhāgavata religion, that although sacrificial ritual is prescribed by the Vedas, the appurtenant slaughter of animals is not a proper thing, and that the ritual should be performed by offering only grain (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 336. 10 and 337). On that account, (and also to some extent, because the Jains later on raised the same kind of objection), the ritual prescribed by the

Śrutis has at present reached such a state, that persons who keep burning a perpetual fire as prescribed by the Śrutis (that is, agnihotris) are rarely to be come across even in sacred places like Benares, and one hears that somebody has performed an animal sacrifice like the Jyotiṣṭoma, only sometimes in 20 or 25 years. Yet, as the Śruti religion is the root of all Vedic religion, the respect felt for it still continues, and the Sūtras of Jaiminī have become authoritative as a science explaining its meaning. But, although the Śruti ritual has in this way fallen into the back-ground, the other ritual mentioned in Smṛtis like the Manu-Smṛti etc. – which is known as the five principal sacrificial rites (pañca mahāyajña) – is still in vogue; and the same

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argument is applied to them as to the cycle of sacrificial ritual prescribed by the Śrutis mentioned above. For instance, Manu and other Smṛti writers have mentioned five daily sacrificial rites to be performed at home, which do not entail the slaughter of animals, namely, the study of the Vedas as a brahma-yajña, oblations to the ancestors as a pitṛ-yajña, oblations into the fire as a deva-yajña, offering of food as bali as a bhūta-yajña, and entertaining guests as a manuṣya-yajña; and the ritual prescribed for a man in the state of a householder is, that he should partake of food after he has in this way satisfied respectively the Ṛṣis, the ancestors, the

deities, the spirits of the departed, and men, by these five sacrifices. (Manu. 3.68 – 123). The food which remains over after the performance of these sacrifices is known as 'amṛta', and the food which remains over after everybody has eaten is known as 'vighasa' .(Manu. 3.285). The 'amṛta' and the 'vighasa' is the proper and beneficial food for the householder; and it is stated not only in the Manu-Smṛti, but also in the Ṛg-Veda and in the Gītā, that if a person does not follow this precept, but eats food only by himself, he eats 'agha' or sin, and he is to be known as 'aghāsī' (Ṛg. 10.117.6; Manu. 3. 118; Gī. 3.13). Besides, these five principal sacrifices, the Upaniṣads and the Smṛtis also consider other acts which are productive of public benefit, such as, charity, truth, kindness, and non-slaughter as proper for the householder (Tai. 1. 11); and, in these texts we find the clear statement: "prajātantuṁ mā vyavacehetsiḥ", i.e., "enlarge thy family, and perpetuate thy generation." All these Actions are looked upon as a kind of sacrifice, and the Taittirīya-Saṁhitā explains the reason for performing them by saying that a Brahmin comes to birth with three kinds of indebtedness, namely, to the Ṛṣis, to the deities, and to his ancestors. Of these, the indebtedness to the Ṛṣis must be satisfied by the study of the Vedas; the indebtedness to the deities, by sacrifice; and the indebtedness to the ancestors, by procreation; otherwise, there is no Release for him (Tai. Saṁ. 6. 3. 10. 5). [1]

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[1] The statement in the Taittirīya Saṁhitā is as follows: "jāyamāno vai brāhmaṇas tṛibhir ṛṇavā jāyate brahmacaryeṇa ṛṣibhyo yajñeṇa



There is a story in the Ādiparva of the Mahābhārata that Jaratkāru did not follow this precept but started austere religious practices before marrying; that, as a result of his having thus destroyed his possible children, he saw his ancestors named Yāyāvara dangling in the air; and that, in performance of their injunctions, he later on married. (Ma, Bhā. A. 13). It is not that all this Karma or sacrifice is to be performed only by Brahmins; and as even women and Śūdras are competent to perform all other Karma, except the Vedic sacrificial ritual, all the Karma performed according to the classification of the four castes made by the writers of the Smṛtis – e. g., warfare by Kṣatriyas etc. – is also a YAJNA. (sacrifice); and the word YAJNA has been used in this comprehensive meaning in these texts. Manu has said that whatever is proper for anyone, is his religious austerity. (TAPA), (11. 236); and it is stated in the Mahābhārata that:

ārambhayajñāḥ kṣatrās ca haviryajñā viśaḥ smṛtaḥ |  
paricārayajñāḥ śūdrās ca japayajñā dvijātayaḥ || (Ma.  
Bhā. Śān. 237. 12)'

that is "ārambha (industry), havi (corn etc.), service, and prayer are the four Yajñas, which are proper for the Kṣatriyas,

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devebhyaḥ prajāyā pitṛbhyaḥ eṣa vā aṅṅo yaḥ putrī yajvā brahmacāri  
vāsīti. "

the Vaiśyas, the Śūdras, and the Brahmins respectively. In short, as Brahmadeva has created all the human beings in the world and with great propriety prescribed for them their various duties (Karma) in life (Ma. Bhā. Anu. 48.3; and Gī. 3.10 and 4.32), all the Karmas enjoined by the Śāstras for the four classes, are Yajñas in a way; and if all these Yajnas or Śāstra-enjoined Karma, or trades, or duties are not kept going by everybody according to his own status, the entire community will suffer, and will ultimately run the risk of being destroyed. It, therefore, follows that Yajnas, in this comprehensive meaning, are always necessary for public benefit.

Here a question arises as follows:— as this course of life, in which predominance is given to Yajnas, and which is proper for the householder according to the Vedas and according to the arrangement of the four castes made by the Smṛtis, is nothing but the performance of Karma, will a man, who performs this household Karma properly in the manner

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prescribed by the Śāstra, that is, morally, and according to Śāstric injunction, thereby escape the cycle of birth and death? And if he escapes that cycle, then where is the importance of Jñāna? The Jñāna-kāṇḍa and the Upaniṣads clearly say that unless a man realises the identity of the Brahman and the

Ātman, and acquires apathy towards Karma, he will not escape the cycle of birth and death, or from the Name-d and Form-ed Māyā or Illusion; and if one considers the religion laid down by the Śruti and the Smṛti, it will be seen that Karma predominates the life of everybody, which (life) is nothing but a Yajña in its comprehensive meaning. Besides, it is clearly stated in the Vedas themselves, that no Karma performed for the sake of Yajna, creates bondage, and that heaven is attained only by the performance of Yajñas. Even if the question of heaven is kept aside, Brahmadeva himself has laid down the rule that rain does not fall unless India and other deities are kept satisfied, and the deities are not satisfied except by the performance of a Yajña. Then, what escape is there for anybody, unless he performs Yajñas or Karma? The chain of creation has been described by Manu, and in the Mahābhārata, the Upaniṣads, and even in the Gītā as follows:—

agnau prāstāhutiḥ samyag ādityam upatiṣṭhate ।

ādityāj jāyate vṛṣṭir vṛṣṭer annaṁ tataḥ prajāḥ ॥

that is, "when the material sacrificed in the Yajña reaches the Sun through the medium of the fire, the Sun causes rain, rain causes food, and the food causes living beings" (Manu. 3.76; Ma. Bhā. Śān. 262.11; Maitryu. 6. 37; and Gī. 3. 14). And if these Yajnas are to be performed by Karma, how will it do to give up Karma? If the Karma in the shape of Yajñas is given up, the wheel of the world will come to a stop, and nobody will have anything to eat. The answer of the Bhāgavata doctrine

and of the Gītā science to this objection is, that they do not ask anybody to give up the sacrificial ritual (Yajña) prescribed by the Vedas, or any other Karma in the shape of Yajña prescribed by the Smṛtis or performed in ordinary life; that they accept the argument that if this cycle of Yajnas, which has been going on from times immemorial is stopped, the world will become desolate; and that, therefore,

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they also lay down the proposition that nobody should give up.' Yajnas which entail Karma (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 340; Gī. 3.16.). Nevertheless, it has been clearly stated in the Jñāna-kāṇḍa, that is, in the Upaniṣads themselves, that unless Karma is destroyed by Jñāna and Renunciation, there can be no Release:. and therefore, they harmonise both these propositions and come to the conclusion that all Actions or Karma must be performed,. giving up the desire for the fruit or reward, and desirelessly or with an apathetic frame of mind (Gī. 17.19). If one performs the sacrifices, such as, the Jyotiṣṭoma etc., prescribed- by the Vedas, with a frame of mind which entertains the hope of heaven, one will undoubtedly reach heaven; because, what is laid down in the Vedas cannot be false; yet, in as much as heaven is not permanent, the Upaniṣads themselves say that:—

prāpyāntaṁ karmaṇas tasya yat kimceha karotyayam ।

tasmāt lokāt punarety asmai lokāya karmaṇe || [1]

that is, "when the fruit of meritorious Action in the shape of sacrifices etc. performed in this life, is exhausted by enjoyment in heaven, the orthodox performer of the Yajña has to come back once more from heaven to this Karma-world or earth." (Br. 4.4, 6; Ve. Sū. 3. 1. 8: Ma. Bhā. Vana. 360. 39); and even. the way of coming down from heaven is described in the Chāndogyopaniṣad (5.10.3 – 9). The following slightly derogatory statements in the Bhagavadgītā, namely, "kāmatmānaḥ svargaparāḥ" (Gī. 2.43), (i.e., "desire-filled, persons running after heaven" ~Translator.), or "traiguṇyaviṣayā vedāḥ" (Gī. 2.45), (i.e., "the Vedas, which deal with matters relating to the three constituents" ~Translator.), have been made with reference to these orthodox persons; and it is again clearly stated in the ninth chapter that: "gatāgataṁ kāmakāmā labhante" (Gī. 9.21), i.e., "such persons have to move backwards and forwards between the heaven and this world". This moving backwards and forwards cannot be escaped otherwise than by the acquisition of Knowledge; and unless these transitions

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[1] In reading the second part of this stanza. 'punaretyasmai ' should be broken up as 'punareti' and 'asmai' so that the requisite number of letters will not be found wanting. One has to do this very often in reading Vedic treatises.

are over, the Ātman does not get true bliss, perfection, or Release. Therefore, the summary of the advice given in the Gītā to everybody is, that one should perform not only the sacrificial ritual etc., but also all other acts prescribed for the four different castes, realising the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, and with equability of mind, and unattachedly, so that one will keep going the cycle of Karma and at the same time be Released (Gī. 18.5, 6.). It is not that a Yajña or sacrifice is performed merely by uttering the word "idaṁ amuka devatāyai na mama" (i.e., "this is for such and such a deity and not for me" ~Translator.) with reference to some deity, and offering' sesamum, rice, or animals into the sacrificial fire. It is more meritorious to offer up animal tendencies like, Desire, Anger etc., which are in everybody's body, by way of sacrifice into the fire of mental control in the shape of an equable frame of mind, than to slaughter the animals themselves (Gī. 4.33); and it is in support of this proposition, that the Blessed Lord has said both in the Gītā and in the Nārāyaṇīya-Dharma that; "from among the sacrifices, I am the sacrifice in the shape of prayer", that is, the highest form of sacrifice (Gī. 10.25; Ma. Bhā. Śān. 3.37.); and the Manu-Smṛti says, that by continual prayer a Brahmin attains Release, whether he does anything else or not (Manu. 2.87). The most important element in a Yajna is the giving up of the idea of mine-ness (mamatva) with, reference to the object thrown into the sacrificial fire, by uttering the words: 'na mama' (i.e., 'this is not for me'), at the

time of the throwing; and the same is the underlying import of charity etc. Charitable gifts stand on the same footing as sacrificial Yajñas. In short, one may say that doing a particular Karma, in which there is no selfish purpose, with a pure frame of mind, is a Yajña in itself. When one accepts this definition, of a Yajña, all acts done with a selfless and desireless frame of mind become a great Yajña in a comprehensive meaning, and the doctrine of the Mīmāṃsā school that no act performed for the purpose of a Yajña becomes a source of bondage, which has reference to sacrifice of wealth, applies to all desireless actions. And as, in performing these actions, the desire of fruit has also been given up, the man has not to move like a shuttle between heaven and earth, and he ultimately acquires

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the blissful state of Release, though he may be performing all that Karma (Gī. 3.9). In short, although saṃsāra (life) entails the performance of Karma or Yajña, the performers fall into two divisions, namely, those who go through life (saṃsāra) in the manner prescribed by the Śāstras, but with the desire of reward (the orthodox ritualists), and those who go through life with a desireless frame of mind, and merely as a duty (the ascetics). And the doctrine of the Gītā, is, that persons falling in the first of these divisions, that is to say, the pure orthodox ritualists, obtain non-permanent fruit in the shape of heaven etc., whereas the others, that is, the Jñānins who perform all

Actions by Jñāna or with a desireless frame of mind, obtain permanent reward in the shape of Release. The Gītā nowhere asks us to give up Karma for the sake of Release. On the other hand, it is clearly stated in the commencement of the eighteenth chapter that the word 'tyāga' = giving up, has been used everywhere in the Gītā as meaning not the denunciation of Action, but the Renunciation of the reward of Action.

As the fruits of Action which are obtained by the orthodox ritualists and by the scientists following the Karma-Yoga, are in this way different, those persons have to go to different spheres by different paths after their death; and these paths are respectively known as 'pitṛyāṇa' and 'devayāṇa' (Śān. 17. 15,16); and these two paths are described in the eighth chapter of the Gītā on the basis of the Upaniṣads. The man who has acquired Knowledge – and he must have acquired this Knowledge at least at the moment of death – (Gī. 2. 72) goes and reaches the sphere of the Brahman, after his body has fallen and has been burnt in fire, through that fire, passing through the flames, daylight, the bright half of the month and the six months of the uttarāyaṇa; and as he attains Release there, he does not take birth again and come back to this mortal world; but, that man, who has been a mere orthodox performer of ritual and has not acquired Knowledge, reaches the sphere of the Moon, through the smoke of the same fire, and through night, and the dark half of the month, and the six months of the dakṣiṇāyana; and when he has enjoyed the



reward of all the meritorious Actions, which he has performed, he again

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returns to this world. This is the difference between the two paths (Gī. 8.23 – 27). As the Upaniṣads use the word 'arciḥ' (flame) instead of 'jyotiḥ' (flame), the first path is also called 'arcirādi', and the second path is called 'dhūmrādi'. When one hears in mind the terminology that our uttarāyaṇa (period during which the Sun is seen moving towards the North) is the day of the deities living on the North Pole, and our dakṣiṇāyaṇa (when the Sun is seen moving towards the South) is their night, it becomes quite clear that the first out of these two paths, namely, 'arcirādi' (jyotirādi) is lighted from beginning to end, and that the other one or the dhūmrādi is one of darkness throughout. In as much as Jñāna (Knowledge) is an embodiment of light, and the Parabrahman is "jyotiṣāṁ jyotiḥ" (Gī. 13.17), i.e., "the brilliance of all brilliance", it is only proper that the path taken by the scientists (Jñānins) after death should be lighted; and the adjectives 'śukla' (white) and 'kṛṣṇa' (black) used in the Gītā with reference to these two paths, mean that they are respectively lighted and dark. The Gītā does not mention the stages subsequent to the uttarāyaṇa, but the Nirukta of Yāska contains a description of the spheres

of the Gods, the Sun, the lightning, and the mental Puruṣa, which come after the uttarāyaṇa (Nirukta 14. 9); and the descriptions of the devayāna given in the various Upaniṣads are harmonised in the Vedānta-Sūtras in which all the subsequent stages after the uttarāyaṇa, namely, the year (saṁvatsara), the spheres of the air, the Sun, the Moon, lightning, Varuṇa, Indra, Prajāpati, and ultimately, the sphere of the Brahman are described (Br. 5.10; 6.2.15; Chān. 5.10; Kauṣī. 1. 3.; Ve. Sū. 4.3.1 – 6).

I have thus far given the description of the various stages in the devayāna and the pitṛyāna paths; but as the stages of the day, the bright half of the month, and the uttarāyaṇa among them commonly denote Time, the questions which next arise are whether the devayāna and the pitṛyāna have or at any time had or had not, any reference to Time. Although the words, day, night, bright half of the month etc. denote Time, yet, the other stages which are mentioned, namely, fire, flame, sphere of air, sphere of lightning etc. do not denote Time; and if one believes that a scient reaches different spheres after death

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according as he dies during the day or during the night, the importance of Jñāna also comes to an end. Therefore, in the

Vedānta-Sūtras, the words, fire, day, uttarāyaṇa etc. are not understood as denoting Time, but are interpreted as referring, to the deities embodied in those ideas; and it is stated that these deities take the Ātmans of the ritualists or of Jñānins to the sphere of Moon, or the sphere of Brahman, by different, paths (Ve. Sū. 4.2.19 – 21; 4.3.4). But, there is a doubt, as to whether or not this opinion is acceptable to the Gītā; because, not only does the Gītā not mention the subsequent stages of the uttarāyaṇa, which do not denote Time, but the Blessed Lord has Himself made a definite reference to Time in mentioning the two paths, in the words- "I shall mention to you that TIME, dying at which TIME the Karma-Yogin returns or does not return" (Gī. 8.23); and, there is a statement in the Mahābhārata, that when Bhīṣma was lying on the bed of arrows, he was waiting for the uttarāyaṇa that is, for the time when the Sun begins to move towards the North, for giving up his life (Bhī. 120; Anu. 167). From this, it is clear that at some date in the past, the day, the bright half of the month, or the uttarāyaṇa were looked upon as proper times for dying. Even in the Ṛg-Veda, where the devayāna and the pitryāna are described (Ṛg. 10.88.15; and Br. 6.2.15), a meaning denoting Time is intended. For this and many other reasons, I have come to the conclusion that when the Vedic Ṛṣis were living near the Meru or the North Pole, that is to say, near the place in the Northern hemisphere, where the Sun is continually visible above the horizon for six months, the lighted period of the uttarāyaṇa, lasting for six months, must have come to be

considered an appropriate time for dying; and, I have made a detailed exposition of this theory in another work of mine. But, whatever the reason may be, there is no doubt that this belief is a very ancient one, and this belief has become merged, at least indirectly if not directly, in the belief in the two paths of the devayāna or the pitṛyāna; nay, according to me, one can trace the idea of these two paths to this belief. Otherwise, there is no explanation for the fact that two words having distinct meanings, namely, kāla (Time), (Gī. 8.23) in one place and 'gati' (goal), or 'sṛti' (path), (Gī. 8.26 and 27) in

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another place, have been used in the Bhagavadgītā with reference to the devayāna and the pitṛyāna. In the Śāṃkarabhāṣya on the Vedānta-Sūtras, it is stated that the Time-denoting meaning of the words devayāna and pitṛyāna is the one described in the Smṛtis, which is applicable only to the Karma-Yoga, and that the true Brahmajñānin reaches the sphere of Brahman through the light-ed path described in the Śrutis which is governed by deities; and in this way, the 'Time-denoting' and the 'deity-denoting' meanings have been disposed of (Ve. Sū. Śāṃ. Bhā. 4. 2. 18 – 21).. But in my opinion, if one considers the original Vedānta-Sūtras themselves, the meaning given by Bādarāyaṇācārya of the word 'devayāna' as deity-denoting, by taking the words uttarāyaṇa etc. as referring to deities, and not to Time, must

have been the one in general acceptance; and it is not proper to believe that the path mentioned in the Gītā is an independent path- different from this path of devayāna mentioned in the Upaniṣads. But, there is no necessity to go into such deep waters here; because, although there is a difference of opinion on the question whether the words, day, night, uttarāyaṇa etc. in the devayāna and pitṛyāṇa were, from the historical point of view, originally Time-denoting or not, yet, there is no doubt that this Time-denoting meaning ultimately dropped out, and that these two words devayāna and pitṛyāṇa have ultimately come to commonly and definitely mean, that whenever a man may die, and without any reference to the time when he dies, the Jñānin reaches the other world by the lighted path according to his Karma, and the orthodox ritualist reaches it by the dark paths. Therefore, whether one considers the words 'day' and 'uttarāyaṇa' as indicative of deities as Bādarāyaṇācārya says, or one considers them figuratively as the rising stages of the lighted path, the proposition that the ordinary meaning of those words in those contexts is indicative of the path followed, is not affected.

But, whether it is the devayāna or the pitṛyāṇa , these paths are obtained only by those who perform the Karma recommended by the Śāstras, that is, righteous Karma; because, it is quite clear that though the pitṛyāṇa path is of a lower order- than the devayāna path, yet, as it takes a person to the sphere of the Moon, which is a kind of heaven, he must

have performed some righteous Action or other, prescribed by Śāstras, in this

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life in order to have deserved experiencing the happiness of that sphere (Gī. 9.20 – 21), It is, therefore, clearly stated in the Upaniṣads that those persons who do not perform in this life even a little of the righteous Karma prescribed by the Śāstras, but are steeped in the performance of Actions which are 'kapūya', i.e., sinful, cannot obtain either of these paths and immediately after death, they either take birth in the 'tiryak' species, that is, in the species of birds, beasts etc., or repeatedly go to the sphere of Yama, that is, to hell. This is known as the 'Third' path (Chān. 5. 10. 8; Kaṭha. 2. 6. 7); and it is stated even in the Bhagavadgītā that purely demonian (āsuri) or sinful persons attain this low state (Gī. 16.19 – 21; 9.12; Ve. 85.3.1.12, 13; Nirukta 14.9).

I have so far explained the manner in which a human being reaches three different states after his death, having regard to his Karma, according to the ancient tradition of the Vedic religion. It is true that Release is attained only by the devayāna path out of these three; yet, this Release is attained only ultimately, after rising step by step through the various stages of the arcirādi (pitṛyāṇa ) path. This path has also the other

names of 'krama-mukti' (gradual Release); and, in as much as ultimate Release is attained by going to the sphere of the Brahman after the fall of the body, that is, after death it is also called 'videha-mukti' (body less Release); but the pure philosophy of the Absolute Self asks why it should be necessary for the man, in whose mind the Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman is continually present, to go anywhere else to reach the Brahman, or to wait for death. The Knowledge of the Brahman which is acquired by the worship of symbols like the Sun etc. taken for worship, that is to say, by the worship of the qualityful Brahman, is, in the beginning, a little incomplete; because, thereby the mind conceives the ideas of the sphere of the Sun, or of the sphere of the Brahman, and there is a risk of these ideas remaining fixed in the mind, to a greater or less extent, even at the moment of death. It is, therefore, proper to say that in order to remove this defect and attain Release, such persons must go by the devayāna path (Ve. Sū. 4.3.15); because, it is a firm doctrine of the philosophy of the Absolute Self that every

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man reaches after death a 'gati' (goal) which is consistent with the desire or 'kratu' present in his mind at the moment of death (Chan. 3. 14. 1). But, the man, in whose mind there does not exist the Dualistic differentiation between the Brahman and his own Ātman resulting from the worship of a qualityful

Brahman, or for any other reason (Tai. 2.7), has evidently not to go anywhere else for attaining the Brahman, in as much as he is perpetually Brahman-natured, It is for this', reason that Yājñavalkya has told Janaka in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka (Bṛ. 4.4.6) that the vital airs (prāṇa) of the man who has become totally desireless, as a result of the pure Realisation of the Brahman, do not go anywhere else – "na tasya prāṇā utkrāmantī brahmaiva san brahmāpyeti"; – and that such a person is always full of the Brahman and merged in the Brahman; and there are statements both in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and the Katha Upaniṣads that such a person "ATRA brahma samaśnute" (Kāṭha. 6.14), i.e., "Realises the Brahman HERE"; and on the authority of these Śrutis. it is stated in the Śivagītā, that it is not necessary to leave one's place in order to obtain Release. The Brahman is not such a thing that it can be said to be in a particular place, and not to be in a particular place (Chāṇ. 7.25; Muṇ. 2.2.11). Then, where is the necessity for the person who has acquired complete Realisation to go to the sphere of the Sun through the uttarāyaṇa, by these gradual steps, in order to attain the Brahman? "brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati" (Muṇ. 3.2.9). i.e., "that man who has realised the Brahman, has become the Brahman in this world", that is, wherever he is; because, in order that it should be necessary for somebody to go to another place, the distinction between the one place, and the other place, which depends on Time or Space, must have remained; and these differences cannot exist in the final, that is to say, the Non-Dual and Supreme Realisation of the



Brahman. Therefore, why should that man, whose permanent mental state is: " yasya sarvam ātmaivā 'bhūt" (Bṛ. 2.4.14) or, "sarvaṁ khalv idaṁ brahma" (Chan 3. 14.1), or "ahaṁ brahmāsmi" (Bṛ. 1.4.10), i.e., "I myself am the Brahman", go to another place for attaining- the Brahman? He is always Brahmanified (brahma-bhūta). As

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stated at the end of the last chapter, there are descriptions in the Gītā itself, of such supreme scients, in such words as follows:— "abhito brahma nirvāṇaṁ vartate veditātmanām" (Gī. 5.26), – since the man, who has given up the Dualistic feeling and Realises the nature of the Ātman, has not to go anywhere else for attaining Release, though he may have to wait for death in order to exhaust his Commenced Karma, the reward of Release in the shape brahma nirvana is always in front of him; or, "ihaiva tair jitaḥ sargo yeṣāṁ sāmye sthitaṁ manaḥ" (Gī. 5.19), i.e., "those men, in whose minds the equality of all created beings in the form of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman is fixed, have conquered both life and death in this world (without having to depend on the devayāna path)"; or, "bhūtapṛthagbhāvam ekastham anupaśyati" , i.e., "that man for whom the diversity in the various created things has disappeared, and who has begun to see them unified (ekastham}, that is, as of the same nature as the Parameśvara, has 'brahma saṁpadyate", i.e., ' gone and joined the Brahman'

" (Gī. 13.30). In the same way, the meaning of the words "who knows essentially" in the sentence "the Karma-Yogin WHO KNOWS ESSENTIALLY the devayāna and pitṛyāṇa paths, is not confused" which has been quoted above, seems to be "who has Realised the ultimate form of the Brahman" (Bhāg. 7. 15. 56), This is the complete Brahmified (brahma-bhūta) state, or the most supreme Brahmī-state, and Śrīmat Śaṅkarācārya has stated in his Śārīraka-bhāṣya (Ve. Sū. 4.3.14), that this is the most Supreme or the most complete state of the Realisation of the Absolute Self. Nay, in order to acquire this state, a man must be said to have become the Parameśvara in a way; and, it need not be said further, that persons who have thus become Brahmified may be said to have gone beyond the rules of what should be done and what should not be done in the world of Actions; because, as the Realisation of the Brahman is always awake in the case of these people, whatever they do is always inspired by a pure and desireless frame of mind, that is to say, is always free from sin or merit. As it is not necessary to go somewhere else or to die, in order to attain the Brahman after this state has been reached, such a Steady-in-Mind devotee of the Brahman (sthitaprajña brahmaniṣṭha) is known

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as 'jīvan-mukta' (birth-released), (See Yo. 3.9). Though Buddhists do not admit the existence of the Ātman or of the Brahman, yet, they have accepted the position that this

desireless state of a jīvan-mukta is the ultimate ideal of man; and they have accepted this doctrine with nominal verbal differences in their religious treatises (see the Appendices). Many persons say that as this ultimate self-less state is naturally antagonistic to the ordinary Actions of life, the man, who has reached this state, automatically escapes Karma and becomes an ascetic (saṁnyāsin). But, as will be seen from the exposition in the next chapter, this position is not accepted by the Gītā; and the doctrine of the Gītā is that it is more proper for the Birth-released man to go on performing all Actions, till he dies, desirelessly, and for the public benefit, as is done by the Parameśvara himself. This doctrine of the Gītā has also been accepted in the Yoga-Vaśiṣṭha (Yo. 6. U. 199).

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# CHAPTER XI.

## RENUNCIATION AND KARMA-YOGA

### (SAṂNYĀSA AND KARMA-YOGA).

saṁnyāsaḥ karmayogaś ca niḥśreyasakarāv ubhau ।  
tayos tu karmasaṁnyāsāt karmayogo viśiṣyate ॥ [1]  
~ Gītā (5.2).

I have, in the last chapter, considered in detail the position that there is only one way, in which one can escape the toils of eternal Karma, by Realising by personal experience the

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- [1] "Renunciation (saṁnyāsa) and Energism (karma-yoga) are both niḥśreyasakara, i.e., productive of Release; but out of the two. Adherence to Action (karma-yoga) is superior to the Renunciation of Action (karma-saṁnyāsa)". The meaning, in "which the word 'saṁnyāsa' need in the first line is to be taken, becomes clear from the phrase 'karma saṁnyāsa' used in the second line. These questions and answers from the Gītā are found adopted at the beginning of the fourth chapter of the Gaṇeśagītā, and there, the present verse has been given with a slight verbal difference as,

"kriyāyogo viyogaś cāpy ubhau mokṣasya sādhane ।  
tayor madkhye kriyāyogas tyāgāt tasya viśiṣyate ॥".

Parabrahman, which exists homogeneously in all created things; as also the questions whether man is or is not free to Realise that immortal Brahman, and how he should perform the transient affairs or Actions in the Māyā-world in order to obtain that Realisation; and I drew the conclusions, that bondage is not the characteristic feature of Action, but of the Mind; and that, therefore, by performing these Actions with a pure, that is, with a disinterested frame of mind, after having by means of mental control gradually reduced the Attachment which one has for the result of the fruit of Action, the Realisation of the Ātman, in the shape of an equable frame of mind, gradually saturates the corporeal organs, and complete Release is ultimately obtained. In this way, I have answered the question as to what is required to be done as being the means for acquiring the highest of ideals in the shape of Release, or the perfect state

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according to the philosophy of the Absolute Self. We have now to consider the most important question, whether after having thus broken the bondage of Karma and fully Realised the Brahman, as a result of the purification of his Mind arising from his having acted in this way, that is, from his having performed Desireless Actions according to his own capacity and status, a scient or Steady-in-Mind (sthitaprajña) should subsequently, that is, when being in the state of a Perfect

(siddha), continue performing Action, or, looking upon himself as one who has performed all that was to be performed, because he has acquired all that was to be acquired, consider all Actions in the world of Illusion as useless and inconsistent with Knowledge, and totally give them up; because, logically speaking, in such a situation, both the positions of totally abandoning Action (karma-saṁnyāsa), and performing those Actions upto death with a desireless frame of mind (karma-yoga), are possible; and, as it is more convenient to chalk out one's course of action consistently with that mode of life which is the better of the two, from the very beginning, that is to- say, while one is training oneself (sādhana-vasthā), no Metaphysical exposition on Action and Non-Action becomes complete, unless one comparatively considers both these modes of life. It would not have been sufficient to say to Arjuna that after the Realisation of the Brahman, it is just the same whether one performs or does not perform Action (Gī. 3.18) on the ground that a man, whose Reason has become equable towards all created beings as a result of Knowledge, is not affected by the merit or demerit of any Action (Gī. 4.20, 21), since Reason is superior to Action in all the affairs of life. The definite injunction of the Blessed Lord to Arjuna was: "Fight"! (yudhyasva!), (Gī. 2.18); and it would be necessary to adduce some cogent reasons in support of this firm advice rather than placing before him the indecisive advice that it was-; just the same whether he fought or did not fight after he had acquired Realisation. Nay, the doctrine of the Gītā has

come into existence only in order to explain why a wise man must perform a particular act, notwithstanding that he sees before his eyes the terrible consequences of it; and this is indeed the most important feature of the Gītā. If it is true that a man is

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bound by Action, whereas, he gets salvation by Knowledge, why should the person, who has acquired Knowledge, at all perform Action? Though the doctrines, that destruction of Karma (karma-kṣaya) does not mean Abandonment of Action, that Action is annihilated by its being performed after one has given up the hope for the Fruit of the Action, and that it is not possible to give up every kind of Action etc., are true, yet, it does not thereby conclusively follow, that one should not give up as much of Action as one can; and logically thinking, such a conclusion does arise. Because, as has been stated in the Gītā, in the same way as it is no more necessary to go to a well for water, when water is to be found in all directions, so also has a scientist no more to depend on Action for anything, after he has acquired that Knowledge, which can be acquired by the performance of Action (Gī. 2.46), Therefore, Arjuna has said to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the commencement of the third chapter as follows: if in Your opinion the desireless or equable frame of mind is superior to Action, I shall make my Reason pure like that of a Sthitaprajña; why do You compel me to perform a

terrible act like war"? (Gī. 3.1), In reply to this question, the Blessed Lord has said that no one can escape Action etc., and in that way justified the doctrine of Action. But, if philosophy has prescribed the two paths of Sāṃkhya (Renunciation) and Energism (Karma-Yoga), it follows naturally that after the acquisition of Knowledge, a man may follow whichever path he considers better. Therefore, in the commencement of the fifth chapter, Arjuna has again said to the Blessed Lord that He should not mis up the two courses of life, but should explain to him (Arjuna) in a definite way which of the two was superior (Gī. 5.1); if, after the acquisition of Knowledge, it was just the same whether Action was performed or not performed, he would perform Action or not perform it as he liked; but, if performing Action was the better course of the two, the Blessed Lord should tell him the reason why that was so, so that, he would act according to His directions. This question of Arjuna is not something new. In the Yoga-Vaśiṣṭha (5. 56. 6), Rāma has asked the same question to Vaśiṣṭha, and in the Gaṇeśagītā (4.1) the king named Vareṇya has asked the same question to Gaṇeśa; and it

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even appears from the works of Aristotle that this question had been raised in very ancient times in Europe in Greece, where philosophical ideas first originated. This same question has been raised at the end of the book on Ethics written by this



well-known Greek philosopher (10.7 and 8); and he has, in the first instance, expressed his opinion that true happiness consists in a scientist spending his life in the quiet contemplation on philosophy instead of in the ups and downs of life (saṃsāra) or of political activity. Yet, in the book written by him subsequently on Politics (7.2 and 3), Aristotle himself says:— some philosophers are engrossed in thoughts of philosophy and others in political activities; and if one considers which of these two modes of life is better, one must say that both the paths are to a certain extent proper; nevertheless, it would be wrong to say that Non-Action is better than Action, [1] because, happiness is nothing but Action; and one may safely say that the acquisition of true nobility consists to a considerable extent of Action founded on Knowledge and the principles of Ethics. From the fact that Aristotle has made two different statements in two different places, the importance of the clear statement in the Gītā that "karma jyāyo hy akarmanah" (Gī. 3.8) – ACTION IS SUPERIOR TO NON-ACTION – becomes clear to the reader. Augustus Comte, a well-known French philosopher of the last century says in his book on Material Philosophy that:— "it is misleading to say that it is better to spend one's life in the contemplation of philosophy; and the philosopher, who adopts such a course of life, and

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[1] "And it is equally a mistake to place inactivity above action, for happiness is activity, and the actions of the just and the wise are the realisation of much that is noble". (See Aristotle's Politics trans, by Jowett. Vol. I. p. 212. The italics are ours).

abandons the doing of whatever public welfare it is possible for him to do, must be said to misuse the material which is at his disposal". On the other hand, the German philosopher Schopenhauer has maintained that in as much as all the activities of the world, nay, even keeping alive itself, is painful, the true duty of every human being in this world is to learn philosophy and to destroy all this Action as early as possible. Comte died in 1857 A. D. and Schopenhauer in 1860

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A. D. The school of Schopenhauer has been continued in Germany by Hartmann. It need not be said that the English philosophers Spencer, Mill, and others are of the same opinion as Comte. But the modern Materialistic philosopher Nietzsche has gone beyond all these philosophers, and he has in his works so severely criticised those who are for giving up Action, that according to him, it is not possible to refer to the supporters of Renunciation (karma-saṁnyāsa) by any milder terms than 'fools of fools'. [1]

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[1] Sulley has in his book Pessimism given the names 'Optimism' and 'Pessimism' respectively to Karma-Yoga and Karma-Tyāga (Sāṁkhya or Renunciation). But, in my opinion, these names are not correct. 'Pessimism' implies the meaning of 'whiner' or 'despondent'. But those persons who give up worldly life, looking upon it as transient, are joyful; and though they give up Buch life, they do so joyfully Therefore, it is not correct, according to me, to refer to them as 'Pessimists'. Bather than

Just as in Europe there have been two schools of thought from the time of Aristotle upto the present day, so also, have there been two modes of life according to the Vedic religion in India from ancient times upto the present day (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 349.72). Out of these two, one course is known as the Saṁnyāsa-Mārga or Sāṁkhya-niṣṭhā or merely SĀM̐KHYA or Jñāna-niṣṭhā (because, it consists of being continually steeped in Knowledge); and the other path is known as the Karma-Yoga or shortly YOGA or Karma-niṣṭhā. I have already in the third chapter clearly explained that the words Sāṁkhya and Yoga do not respectively indicate the Kapila-sāṁkhya and the Pātañjala-yoga. But, in as much as, the word 'saṁnyāsa' is also rather ambiguous, it is necessary to explain its meaning here more fully. The word 'saṁnyāsa' does not in this place mean 'not marrying', or 'giving up wife and children and wearing saffron-coloured robes', in case

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that, it would be more proper to refer to Karma-Yoga in English as 'Energism', and to the Sāṁkhya or the Saṁnyāsa path as 'Quietism'. As Knowledge of the Brahman is common to both these paths according to the Vedic religion, happiness or peace is the same according to both; we do not make the difference that one path leads to happiness and the other to unhappiness, or that one is hopeful and the other hopeless.

one has married, or 'merely adopting the fourth stage of life'. Because, though Bhīṣma was a celibate, he was taking part in politics till the moment of his death; and Śrīmat Śaṁkarācārya, after passing to the fourth state straight from the first state of celibacy, or in the Mahārāṣṭra, Śrī Samartha Rāmadāsa, remaining a celibate mendicant for life, have brought about the salvation of the world by spreading Knowledge. The crucial point in the present place is whether after having acquired Knowledge, a man should take part in all the activities of the world as duties and for public welfare, or should entirely give them up, looking upon them as illusory. He who takes part in these activities is the Karma- Yogin, whether he has married or has not married, and whether he wears white clothes or saffron-coloured clothes. Nay, for performing these activities, it is sometimes more convenient to remain unmarried or to wear saffron-coloured robes, or to go and live outside the town; because, by doing so, there is no obstruction in the way of applying one's whole time and energy to public welfare, as it does not entail the worry of maintaining a family. Though such persons may be ascetics according to the dress which they wear, yet, essentially they are Karma-Yogins; but on the other hand, such persons as look upon all worldly activities as useless, and abandon them and sit quiet, may be said to be ascetics, whether they have entered the fourth state of life or not. In short, the Gītā does not attach importance to white clothing or saffron- coloured clothing or to marriage or celibacy, but considers only whether the scientist takes or does

not take part in worldly activities, in differentiating between Renunciation and Energism. All other things are of no importance, at any rate according to the religion of the Gītā. The words 'karma- saṁnyāsa' or 'karma-tyāga' would be more appropriate and unambiguous in the present place than 'saṁnyāsa' (Renunciation) or 'caturthāśrama ' (the fourth state). But, as it is more usual to use the single word 'saṁnyāsa' rather than the two words mentioned above, I have here explained the -technical meaning of that word. Those, who consider worldly activities as fruitless, give up worldly life; and, entering the forests, take to the fourth state of life, according to the Smṛti

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religion; and, therefore, this path of Abandonment of Action, is called 'Saṁnyāsa'. But, the important factor in that procedure is the Abandonment of Action, and not the saffron-coloured robes.

Though it is thus usual either to continue the performance of Action (Karma-Yoga) or to abandon Action (Karma-Saṁnyāsa), after the complete acquisition of Knowledge, doctrine-supporting commentators on the Gītā have in this place raised the question whether both these paths are equally independent and in a position to give Release, or whether the

Karma-Yoga, is the preliminary or first step, and one has ultimately to abandon Action, and renounce the world in order to attain Release. It is seen that these two courses of life have been mentioned as independent paths in the second and third chapters of the Gītā. But those commentators, in whose opinion it is impossible to attain Release unless a man renounces the world and abandons the ordinary activities of life, – and who- have started commenting on the Gītā with the preconceived notion that that must be the doctrine propounded by the Gītā – pronounce the sum and the substance of the Gītā to be that "Karma-Yoga, is not an independent path of obtaining Release; that one must, in the beginning, perform Actions in order to purify the mind, but ultimately go in for Renunciation; and that Renunciation is the paramount and the ultimate cult." But if this meaning is adopted, then the importance of the word, 'dvividhā' (two-fold) in the statement of the Blessed Lord that the Sāṃkhya (Sāṃnyāsa) and Yoga (Karma-Yoga) are two kinds of cults in this world (Gī. 3.3), is lost. The word 'Karma-Yoga' can be interpreted in three different ways: (1) according to the first interpretation, Release is obtained by performing the Karma laid down by the Śrutis and the Smṛtis, or the duties of the four castes, such as sacrifice etc. But this interpretation of the Mīmāṃsā school is not acceptable to the Gītā (2. 45); (2) the second meaning is, that Action should be performed, but only for the purification of the Mind, in as much as the performance of Action (Karma-Yoga) is essential for the

purification of the Mind. According to this interpretation, Karma-Yoga becomes the anterior part or the preliminary preparation for the Renunciation (Samnyāsa) state. But this

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is not the Karma-Yoga mentioned in the Gītā. (3) The important question in the Gītā is, whether or not a scient, who has Realised in what the benefit of his Self lies, should go on performing till death the worldly Actions, prescribed for the caste to which he belongs, such as, fighting etc.; and the Karma-Yoga described in the Gītā is, that even a scient, who has acquired Knowledge, must perform the Actions prescribed for the four castes with a disinterested frame of mind (Gī. 3.55); and it can never be a preliminary preparation for Renunciation; because, in this path, a man can never abandon Action, and the only question is of obtaining Release. But, the Gītā clearly says that in as much as Knowledge has already been acquired by the man, Desireless Action does not become a source of bondage; and that the Release which can be obtained by Renunciation, can also be obtained by this Karma-Yoga (Gī. 5 5.) Therefore, the words: "loke smin dvividhā niṣṭhā" in the Gītā (Gī. 3.3) must be interpreted as indicating that the path of Karma-Yoga taught by the Gītā is not a preparation for Renunciation, but that both these paths are equally good (tulyabala), from the point of view of Release, after Realisation has come (Gī. 8.2). That is why the Blessed

Lord has distinguished between these two paths in the latter half of the stanza (Gī. 3.3) by saying: "jñānayogena sām̐khyānām karma-yogena yoginām" (i.e. "the path for Release followed by Sām̐khyas is the Jñāna-Yoga, and that followed by Yogins is the Karma-Yoga" ~Translator.); and the two words 'anye' (the one) and 'apare' (the other) in the line "anye sām̐khyena yogena karma-yogena cāpare" in the thirteenth chapter, do not become appropriate unless these two paths are considered independent (Gī. 13.24). Besides, if one considers the history given in the Mahābhārata of the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine, from which the Activistic path (Yoga) has been adopted into the Gītā, the same proposition is confirmed, The origin of these two paths has been described in the Mahābhārata by saying that after the Blessed Lord had, in the beginning of the world, directed Hiranyagarbha, that is, Brahmadeva, to create the world, the seven mind-born sons, Marīci and others, came into existence from him; and these seven sons adopted YOGA, that is the Activistic (pravṛtti) path of Action for properly carrying out the work of creation;

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whereas, his other seven mind-born sons, namely Sanatkumāra, Kapila, and others took up the SĀM̐KHYA, that is the Path of Renunciation (nivṛtti) from birth; and later on, it is clearly stated that, from the point of view of Release, both these paths are equally useful (tulyabala), that is to say, they



are different from each other and independent, and individually capable of bringing about the attainment to one and the same Parameśvara in the form of the Vāsudeva (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 348.74; 349.63-73). In the same way, a distinction is made between the Hiranyagarbha as the founder of the Activistic Path and Kapila as the founder of the Sāṃkhya Path, and it is nowhere stated that Hiranyagarbha later on give up the performance of Action. On the other hand, it is stated that the Blessed Lord created the cycle of Yajñas in the shape of Karma, in order to keep going without a hitch all the activities of the creation, and directed Hiranyagarbha, as also other gods, to keep this cycle continuously moving (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 340.44 – 75 and 339.66, 67). From this it is established beyond doubt that Sāṃkhya and Yoga are two essentially independent modes of life. It will thus be seen that the attempt of some commentators on the Gītā to make out that the Karma-Yoga is inferior, is the result of a traditionary insistence; and that the statement occurring every now and then in these commentaries that the Karma-Yoga is merely a medium for the acquisition of Knowledge, or for Renunciation, is something, which these commentators say of their own accord, and which is not borne out by the Gītā. In my opinion, this is the greatest fault of those commentators on the Gītā who support the Path of Renunciation; and unless this doctrine-supporting point of view of the commentators is given up, the true and mystic import of the Gītā can never be realised.

It is not enough to say that Karma-Saṁnyāsa and Karma- Yoga are individually equally productive of Release, and that one is not the preliminary part of the other; because, if both these paths are equally productive of Release, it follows that one may adopt whichever path he likes; and then, instead of arriving at the conclusion that he must fight, Arjuna would have the choice of the two paths of fighting, or renouncing

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the world instead of fighting, after he had acquired Knowledge by the advice of the Blessed Lord. Therefore, Arjuna has asked the natural and straight question, namely, "tell me in a definite way which of these two paths is more proper" (Gī. 5.11), so that it would be easy for him to act according to that path. Arjuna having asked this question in the beginning of the fifth chapter, the Blessed Lord has immediately in the next verse given a clear answer to it, namely, "though the Path of Renunciation, and the Path of Karma-Yoga are both equally productive of Release (niḥśreyasa), yet, out of these two paths THE WORTH OR IMPORTANCE OF KARMA-YOGA IS GREATER (viśiṣyate)", (Gī. 5.3); and I have designedly quoted this stanza at the beginning of this chapter. It is not that these are the only words in the Gītā which support the superiority of Karma-Yoga. There are several other statements in the Gītā which contain that advice to Arjuna, such as,—"tasmād yogāya yujyasva" (Gī. 2.50), i.e., "therefore, adopt the Karma-Yoga";

or, "mā te saṅgo 'stv akarmaṇi" (Gī. 2.47), i.e., "do not insist on not performing Actions"; or,

yastv indriyāṇi manasā niyamyārabhaterjuna ।

karmaindriyaṇi karmayogam asaktaḥ sa viśiṣyate ॥ (Gī. 3.7),

that is, instead of abandoning Action, "controlling the organs by the Mind, and using the organs of Action for performing Actions with a desireless frame of mind is VIŚEṢA (more IMPORTANT), (viśiṣyate)"; because, in any case, "karma jyāyo by akarmaṇaḥ", i.e., "Action is SUPERIOR (śreṣṭha) to Inaction" (Gī. 3.8); "therefore, go on performing Actions" (Gī. 4.15); or, "yogamātiṣṭhottiṣṭha" (Gī. 4.2), i.e., "accept the Path of (Karma-) Yoga and stand up to fight"; or "(yogi) jñānibhyo 'pi mato 'dhikaḥ", i.e., "the merit of the (Karma-) Yogin is more (adhikaḥ) than that of the Jñāna-margin (of Saṁnyāsa)"; or, "tasmād yogi bhavārjuna" (Gī. 4.6), i.e., "therefore, O Arjuna, become a (Karma-) Yogin"; or, "mām anusmara yudhya ca" (Gī.8.7), i.e., "think of me and fight" etc., etc.; and in that advice the clear words 'JYĀYAḤ' 'ADHIKAḤ', ' VIŚIṢYATE' have been used in order to show

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that the merit of Karma-Yoga is higher than that of Renunciation or Non-Action. And even in the summing up in

the 18th. chapter, the Blessed Lord has again said (Gī. 18.6, 7) that, "it. is my DEFINITE and BETTER opinion that it is not proper to abandon those Actions which have been prescribed, and that, one must always perform Actions without being attached to them". From this, it is established beyond doubt, that according to the Gītā, Karma-Yoga is superior to Renunciation.

But how will this doctrine of the Gītā be appreciated by these commentators, whose doctrinal opinion is that Renunciation or Devotion is the ultimate and most superior duty, and that Karma is merely a means for the purification of the Mind, and not the principal ideal or duty? It is not that they had not seen that the Gītā has clearly given a higher importance to Karma-Yoga than to Renunciation; but, if they accepted this opinion as correct, their doctrines would become inferior; and, therefore, these doctrine-supporting commentators have experienced considerable difficulty in disposing of the question put by Arjuna, and the answer given to it by the Blessed Lord, in the beginning of the fifth chapter, though they are both clear, logical, and unambiguous. Their first difficulty has been that the question as to which one out of the two paths, namely, Action or Inaction, is superior, does not arise, unless both these paths are considered independent; because, if, as these commentators say, Karma-Yoga is only a preliminary preparation for Jñāna or Knowledge, it naturally follows that the preliminary part is inferior, and that Jñāna or Saṁnyāsa is

superior; and then, there would remain no room for Arjuna to ask the question he asked; but, if it is admitted that the question was a proper one, it becomes necessary to admit that these two paths are independent; and, if that admission is made, the position that the Path of Renunciation supported by them is the only path which leads to Release, becomes untenable! Therefore, they have first passed judgment that the question asked by Arjuna was itself not proper; and they have made up their minds to say the same thing about the reply of the Blessed Lord! But, even after this struggle, the clear answer- given by the Blessed Lord to Arjuna that: "the merit or superiority of the Karma-Yoga is GREATER (viśeṣa)", (Gī. 5.2),

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cannot be satisfactorily explained; and, therefore, these commentators have gone to the length of laying down, on their own hook, and contrary to the anterior and posterior context, that the statement "karma-yogo viśiṣyate", i.e., "the superiority of Karma-Yoga is greater," is a fallow praise of the Karma- Yoga, or merely an artha-vada (See. p. 31 above ~Translator.); and that, even according to the Blessed Lord, the Path of Renunciation is better; and they have, in this way attempted to satisfy themselves (Gī. Śāṁ. Bhā. 5.2; 6.1, 2; 18.11). Not only in the Śāṁkarabhāṣya, but also in the Rāmānujabhāṣya has this stanza been interpreted as being a

mere praise of the Karma-Yoga and an obiter dicta (artha-vāda), (Gī. Rā. Bhā. 5.1); because, although Rāmānujācārya was not a Non-Dualist, yet, as in his opinion Devotion was the principal ideal, Karma-Yoga became merely a means for Devotion based on Knowledge (Gī. Rā. Bhā; 3.1). My readers will see how the meaning in the original is stretched and mutilated, where the original work and the commentators support different doctrines, and the commentators begin to comment on the original in the firm belief that the doctrine supported by them is borne out by the original. Were not Śrī Kṛṣṇa or Śrī Vyāsa in a position to clearly say to Arjuna in plain Sanskrit: "O Arjuna, your question is improper"? But as, instead of doing so, it has been stated in numerous places that "Karma-Yoga is superior", one has to say that the doctrine-supporting interpretation, which has been put on the stanza by these commentators, is incorrect; and if one refers to the previous and the subsequent context, this inference is fortified. Because, it is stated in various places in the Gītā, that the scientist does not abandon Action, but performs all Actions with a disinterested frame of mind after attaining Realisation. (Gī. 2.64; 3.19; 3.25; 18.9). Śrīmat Śaṅkarācārya has, in his Śaṅkarabhāṣya, in the beginning raised the question whether Release is obtained by means of Knowledge, or by the combination of Knowledge and Action and he has expounded the import of the Gītā as being that Release is obtained by Knowledge alone, by the destruction of! Karma resulting from Knowledge, and that Karma is not necessary for Realisation;

and, he has from this drawn the subsequent inference, that the Blessed Lord must be considered

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to have accepted the position in the Gītā, that even according to the Gītā, Karma becomes meaningless when once the Mind has been purified, as Karma is not necessary for obtaining Release; and that as Karma is inherently binding or inconsistent with Knowledge, a scient must give up (Action after acquiring Knowledge. That school of thought which says that even after having acquired Knowledge, a man must perform Action, is known as the Knowledge-Action (jñāna-karma-samuccaya) school, and the above-mentioned argument of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya is the principal argument against it. The same argument has been accepted even by Madhvācārya (Gī. Mā. Bhā. 3.31). But from my point of view, this argument is neither satisfactory nor unanswerable; because (1) although Desire-prompted (kāmya) Actions are binding and contra-indicated for Knowledge, the same reasoning does not apply to Desire-less (niṣkāma) Actions; and (2) although Action may not be necessary for obtaining Release after having acquired Knowledge, that does not negative the proposition that a scient must, for other cogent reasons, perform Desireless Action, though he has obtained Realisation. It is not that Karma has come into existence only for the purpose of purifying the Mind of those who desire

Release, nor that that is the sole object of Karma. Therefore, one may say, that a scient has to perform the various activities in the world of Karma, which are appropriate for him according to his status in life, for other reasons than the obtaining of Release. I have in this chapter, later on, considered in detail, what these reasons are. For the moment, I will only say that the doctrine of the Gītā was expounded for the sole purpose of explaining these reasons to Arjuna, who was desirous of becoming an ascetic; and one cannot draw the inference that the Gītā supports the Path of Renunciation, by arguing that after the purification of the Mind, performance of Action is not necessary for obtaining Release. It is true that the followers of Śaṅkarācārya hold that after the acquisition of Knowledge, one must renounce the world and give up Action; but on that account it does not follow, that the same is the teaching of the Gītā, or that one has to interpret the Gītā in a manner consistent with the doctrines laid down by Śaṅkarācārya or some other

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doctrinaire, after first taking it for granted that the doctrine expounded by Śaṅkarācārya or such other doctrinaire, is the only true doctrine. It has been definitely laid down in the Gītā that even after the acquisition of Knowledge, it is better to perform Action than to renounce the world; then you may call it a different school of thought or give it some other name.



Still, it must be borne in mind that, although according to the Gītā, Energism (Karma-Yoga) is in this way stated to be superior, the Gītā does not maintain like other schools, which cannot endure a different philosophy, that the Path of Renunciation is altogether objectionable; and nowhere in the Gītā has any disrespect being shown for that path. On the other hand, the Blessed Lord has clearly stated that both the Path of Renunciation and the Path of Energism or Action (Karma-Yoga) equally lead to Release, that is to say, that they are both of the same value from the point of view of Release; and later on, the Blessed Lord has stated that "ekam sām̐khyam̐ ca yogam̐ ca yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati" (Gī. 5.5), i.e., "that man who has realised that both these paths are of equal value, has realised the true principle", as also that even in the 'Karma-Yoga,' one has to make a 'Renunciation' of the hope for the fruit of Action – "na hy asaṁnyasta saṁkalpo yogī bhavati kaś ca na" (Gī. 6.2), (i.e., "unless a man performs a saṁnyāsa (tyāga) of the saṁkalpa, that is, of the hope of reward, born of a desirous mind, he does not become a (Karma-) Yogin" ~Translator.) and He has in this way skilfully harmonised as far as possible these two paths. But, though from the point of view of Release, the two paths of either abandoning Karma or continuing to perform Karma after acquiring Knowledge (and not before) may be of the same value, yet, from the point of view of worldly affairs, the most superior mode of life is to keep the Renunciation in the Mind itself, and to go on performing lifelong the Action which is

beneficial to the world, through the medium of the bodily organs; because, the Blessed Lord has definitely said that in such a mode of life, both Renunciation and Action find a place; and Arjuna has, according to this advice, become ready to fight. This is really the difference between the scient (jñānin) and the ignorant (ajñānin). If one considers only the śarīra-karma, that is, the Actions which are no

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be performed by the organs, these are same in the both the cases, but the ignorant person performs them with an attached Reason, and the scient, the unattached Reason (Gi. 3.25). This doctrine of the Gita has been expounded by the dramatist Bhāsa in one of his dramas in the following words:—

prājñāśya mūrkhasya ca kāryyoge |

samatvam abhyeti tanur na buddhiḥ || (Avimāra. 5.5)

that is, "when Actions are performed by the wise man, or the fool, the Body is the same, but the Mind is different."

Some sundry supporters of the Path of Renunciation go further and say in this matter that: it is true that the Gita advises Arjuna to prefer Action; but, this advice was given by the Blessed Lord, bearing in mind the fact that Arjuna has still not acquired Knowledge, and was fit only for performing Actions for purifying the Mind, the path of Karma-tyāga

(Abandonment of Action) is the proper course in the state of a siddha (Perfect), even according to the Blessed Lord. But, this means the Blessed Lord feared that if He had told Arjuna that he was ignorant, as he (Arjuna) would have insisted on acquiring complete Knowledge, as was done by Naciketā in the Kaṭhapaniṣad; and then He (the Blessed Lord) would have to initiate Arjuna in the complete Knowledge, and when this complete Knowledge has been imparted, he (Arjuna) would give up war-fare, and become an ascetic, and upset His (the Blessed Lord's) plans about the war; and the Blessed Lord expounded the Gītā to his most beloved devotee, in order to deceive him. In my opinion, one cannot do better than give up all argument with persons, who, in order to be able to support their own doctrine, stoop so low as to suggest that the Blessed Lord was guilty of such a mean action as to deceive His own beloved disciple. But in order that ordinary people should not be taken in by this deceptive argument, I say that Śrī Kṛṣṇa had not to be afraid of anyone, if He had wanted to say Arjuna in clear terms: "you are ignorant, and therefore, you must go on performing Actions"; and if after that, Arjuna had become rebellious,

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the Blessed Lord was quite capable of keeping him in ignorance, and making him fight according to his inherent tendencies (prakṛti-dharma), (Gī. 18.59 and 61); but instead of

doing so, He has over and over again explained to Arjuna the meaning of 'jñāna' and 'vijñāna' (Gī. 7.2; 9.1; 10.1; 13.2; 14.1), and at the end of the fifteenth chapter, He has said to Arjuna: "by understanding this science, a man becomes a scient, and a perfect being (Gī. 15.23); and having in this way made of Arjuna a complete scient, the Blessed Lord has made him fight of his own free will (Gī. 18.63). From this, it becomes abundantly clear that the best mode of life for a scient according to the Blessed Lord, is to continue to perform Action desirelessly, even after having acquired Knowledge. Besides, even if Arjuna is, for the sake of argument, looked upon as ignorant, one cannot say that Janaka and other ancient Karma-Yogins, as also the Blessed Lord Himself, whose illustrations have been given by the Blessed Lord in support of His doctrine, were all ignorant. Therefore, one has to say that this fallow argument, based on a doctrinal insistence, is totally improper and objectionable, and that the Gītā has expounded nothing but the doctrine of Action combined with Knowledge.

It has become necessary for me to go in for this introduction, in order to show that the two paths of Abandonment of Action (Sāṃkhya) and Energism (Karma-Yoga) were in vogue from times immemorial, not only in our country, but in other countries; and to show how and why doctrine- supporting commentators have perversely dealt with the two important doctrines of the Gītā on this subject, namely that, (1) these two paths are independent, that is, not inter-dependent, from

the point of view of Release; and are of equal value; and that one is not a part of the other; and that, (2) out of these two, Karma-Yoga is the superior path, though these doctrines are quite clear by themselves. I will now consider the subject-matter of the present chapter, namely, the reasons which have been given in the Gītā for proving that even in the state of Perfection, the path of Karma-Yoga, that is, of performing Actions till death with a desireless frame of mind, is more meritorious than Abandonment of Action. Some of these matters have been explained by me in the chapter on

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Happiness and Unhappiness (sukha-duḥkha-viveka) above; but as the argument in that chapter was restricted to the question of happiness and unhappiness, it was not possible for me to fully deal with this subject-matter there. I have, therefore, started this independent chapter here. I have explained in the last chapter that the Vedic religion is divided into the Karma-kāṇḍa and Jñāna-kāṇḍa, and shown what the difference between the two, is. Out of them, there are directions in the Karma-kāṇḍa, that is, in the Śruti texts, such as, the Brahmanas, and partly also in the Upaniṣad texts, that every man, be he a Brahmin or a Kṣatriya, must maintain a sacred fire, and perform the 'jyotiṣṭoma' and other sacrificial ritual according to his own status; and there also clear statements that it is the duty of everyone to marry and

increase his generation. See for instance, the statements:  
"etad vai jarāmaryaṁ satraṁ yad agnihotraṁ", i.e. "this sacrifice in the shape of the sacrificial fire (agnihotra) must be kept alive till death" (Sa. Brā. 12.4.1.1); . or "prajātantuṁ mā vyavatchhetsyiḥ" . i.e. "do not break the thread of thy generation" (Tai. U. 1.11.1); or "īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ", i.e., "whatever is in this world, should be located' into the Parameśvara, that is to say, one should realise that it is of the Parameśvara and not of oneself"; and, with this desireless frame of mind,

kurvan neveha karmāṇi jijīviṣec chataṁ samāḥ |  
evam tvayi nānyatheto 'sti na karma lipyate nare ||  
(Īśā. 1 and 2)

that is, "one should entertain the desire of living upto a hundred years, which is the limit of the life of man, whilst performing. Actions; and when Actions are performed 'evam', that is, with that īśāvāsyam (god-dedicating) frame of mind, they will not- have a binding force (lepa) on you (on any human being), and there is no other way for escaping (that lepa or bondage)". But, when one leaves the Karma-kāṇḍa and moves on to the Jñāna-kāṇḍa , one also comes across contradictory statements in the same Vedic treatises, such as, "brahmavidāpnoti param" (Tai. 2.1.1), i.e., "Release is obtained by Knowledge of the Brahman"; or, "nānyaḥ panthā vidyate 'yanāya" (Śve. 3.8), i.e., "there is ,no "other path, except Knowledge, for obtaining

Release"; or "pūrve vidvāmsaḥ prajāṁ na kāmāyante | kiṁ prajāyā kariṣyāmo yeṣāṁ no 'yaṁ ātmā 'yaṁ loka iti te ha sma putraiṣaṇāyāś ca vittaiṣaṇāyāś ca lokaiṣaṇāyāś ca vyutthāyātha bhikṣācaryaṁ caranti" (Bṛ. 4. 4. 22 and 3. 5. 1), i.e., "the scientists of yore did not have any desire for children; they used to say: 'as we see that the whole world is nothing but our Ātman, why should we have any (other) generation?' and, without entertaining the 'eṣaṇā', that is, desire, for wealth, children, heaven, and the other spheres, such scientists used to renounce those things, and roam about the world at will begging for alms"; or, "such persons, who have thus become ascetics, attain Release (Muṇ. 1.2.11); or, ultimately "yad ahar eva virajet tad altar eva pravrajat" (Jābā. 4), i.e., "on such day as your mind becomes apathetic, on that day you should renounce the world", As the directions of the Vedas are in this way two-fold (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 240.6), it becomes necessary to see whether there is some other means of deciding which of the two paths,- namely, Activism (pravṛtti) or Renunciation (nivṛtti), Karma-Yoga or Sāṁkhya, is superior. The question could have been decided by considering the 'ācāra', that is, the conduct, usage, or custom of well-behaved persons (śiṣṭa); but, in this matter, even the conduct of such persons is seen to be two-fold. It is clear from history that Śuka, Yājñavalkya, and others had taken to the Path of Renunciation, whereas Janaka,

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Jaigīṣavya and other scientists had adopted the Path of Action. Therefore, Bādarāyaṇācārya has said in the argument in the demonstrated conclusion (siddhānta-pakṣa), that both these paths are 'tulyaṁ tu darśanam', that is, of equal value from the point of view of conduct (Ve. Sū. 3.4.9); and there is even a Smṛti text that:—

vivekī sarvadā muktaḥ kurvato nāsti kartṛtā ।

alepavādam āśritya śrīkṛṣṇajanakau yathā ॥

that is, "that person who has acquired complete Knowledge- of the Brahman, is always a non-doer (akartā), isolated (alīpta), and eternally released like Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Janaka". [1]

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in the same way, in the Bhagavadgītā, after mentioning the tradition of the Karma-Yoga from Manu to Ikṣvāku, etc., it is stated that: "evaṁ jñātvā kṛtaṁ karma pūrvair api mumukṣubhiḥ" (Gī. 4.15), i.e., knowing this scientists like Janaka and other performed Action in ancient times. In the Yogavāśiṣṭha and the Bhāgavata, there have been given other illustrations besides that is Janaka (Yo. 5.75; Bhāga. 2.8.43 – 45). If someone doubts whether Janaka and others had

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[1] Ānandagiri has taken this statement as being from the Smṛtis in his commentary on the Śāṁkarabhāṣya on the Kāthopaniṣad (Kāṭha. 2.19). I have not found where the original is.



acquired complete Knowledge of the Brahman it is clearly stated in the Yogavāśiṣṭha that all these persons were jīvanmukta (birth-released). Not only in Yogavāśiṣṭha , but also in the Mahabharata, Vyasa is stated to have sent his son Śuka ultimately to Janaka in order to get complete Knowledge of the science of Release (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 325 and Yo. 2.1). So also, even in the Upaniṣads, there are traditions that the King Aśvapati Kaikeya had taught the knowledge of the Brahman to the Ṛṣi Uddālaka, and that Ajātaśatru, the king of Kasi, had taught it to Gārgya Bālāki (Br. 2.1). Yet , there is nowhere any statement that either Aśvapati or Janaka had given up their kingdom, and had taken to Renunciation in the form of the Abandonment of Action. On the other hand, in the conversation between Janaka and Sulabhā, he (Janaka) first describes to her his own state by saying: I am attachmentless, that is I am ruling without being attached, if one my hand is anointed with sandal-wood paste and the other hand cut off, the pain and the pleasure of both, would be the same etc. and he goes on to say:—

mokṣe hi trividhā niṣṭhā dṛṣṭvā 'nyair mokṣavittamaiḥ ।  
jñānaṁ lokottaraṁ yac ca sarvatyāgaś ca karmaṇām ॥  
jñānaniṣṭhāṁ vadanti eke mokṣasāstravido janāḥ ।  
karmaniṣṭhāṁ tayaivānye yatayaḥ sūkṣmadarśinaḥ ॥  
prahāyobhyam apy evaṁ jñānaṁ karma ca kevalam ।

tr̥tīyeyam samākhyātā niṣṭhā tena mahātmanā || (Ma.  
Bhā. Śān. 320.38 – 40)

That is, those who know the science of Release have prescribed three different systems (1) acquiring 'Jñāna, and abandoning

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all Action; that is known by the experts in the science of Release as 'Jñāna-niṣṭhā; (2) in the same way, other subtle philosophers mention a Karma-niṣṭhā; but besides the pure Jñāna-niṣṭhā and the pure Karma-niṣṭhā, this (3) third Niṣṭhā or path, (that is, the path of performing Action after having destroyed Attachment by means of Knowledge) has been mentioned to me by that sage (Pañcaśikha)". The word 'niṣṭhā' means 'that course of leading one's life by which ultimate Release is obtained'; and even in the Śāṅkarabhāṣya on the Gītā, the word 'niṣṭhā' has been interpreted as meaning 'anuṣṭheyatātparyam', that is, the 'tatparatā' (being engrossed) in that which is 'anuṣṭheya'- (to be performed in life). Out of these paths of living one's life, Jaiminī and other followers of the Mīmāṃsā school have not given any importance to Knowledge, but have maintained that Release is obtained solely by performing sacrificial ritual:—

ījānā bahūbhiḥ yajñaiḥ brāhmaṇā veda-pāragāḥ |

śāstrāṇi cet pramāṇam syuḥ prāptās te paramām gatim  
|| (Jai. Sū. 5.2.23)

because, if one believes the contrary, the injunctions of the Śāstras, that is, of the Vedas, will become futile. (See the Śābara-bhāṣya on Jai. Sū. 5.2.23); and the writers of the Upaniṣads, as also Bādarāyaṇācārya have treated all sacrificial ritual as inferior, and laid down the doctrine that Release is obtained by Knowledge, and that it cannot be obtained by anything other than Knowledge (Ve. Sū. 3.4.1, 2). But Janaka says that Pañcaśikha (being himself a follower of Sāṃkhya philosophy) had taught a third system (niṣṭhā) distinct from both these systems, namely, of performing Actions, being free from Attachment. It becomes clear from the words "distinct from both these niṣṭhā" that this third system is not a part of either of the two systems, but is a totally independent one. This third system of Janaka has been ultimately mentioned even in the Vedānta-Sūtras (Ve. Sū. 3.4.32 – 35); and even in the Bhagavadgītā, it is this third system of Janaka – with the addition of Devotion – which has been mentioned. But the doctrine of the Gītā is, that the path of the Mīmāṃsā school, that is, of Karma without Jñāna, does

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not lead to Release, but only to heaven Gī. 2.42 – 44; 9.21), and that path which does not produce Release can also not be

called a 'niṣṭhā', because the definition of niṣṭhā is a path which ultimately leads to Release is accepted by everybody. Therefore, although in referring in a general way to the various schools of thought, Janaka has referred to three systems, yet, the pure Karma-mārga of the Mīmāṃsā school, which excludes Knowledge, has been omitted from the class of niṣṭhā, and the other remaining two have been described in the beginning of the third chapter of the Gītā (Gī. 3.3). These are the system of Pure Knowledge (Sāṃkhya), and the system of Knowledge combined with Desireless action (Yoga); and in support of the second out of these two systems, (namely, of the third system according to the Janaka), the historical illustration of Janaka has been mentioned as: "karmaṇaiva hi saṃsiddhim āsthitā janakādayaḥ" (Gī. 3.20), i.e., "Janaka and other obtained Release only by performing Action in this way". Even if we do not take into account the case of Janaka and other Kṣatriya kings, Vyāsa procreated the two Kṣetraja sons, Dhṛtarāṣṭra and Pāṇḍu, in order to keep unbroken the ruling line of Vicitravīrya; and he wrote Mahābhārata by three years' continuous labour in order to redeem the world; and it is well-known that in the Kaliyuga, Śrī Śaṃkarācārya, who was a protagonist of the Saṃnyāsa School based on the Smṛtis, re-established the Hindu religion by his super-human intelligence and industry. Nay, the world itself came into existence when Brahmadeva was ready to perform Action; and as I have stated above, there is a statement in the description of the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine in the Mahābhārata, that Marīci and the

other six mind-born sons came into existence out of Brahmadeva, and they stuck to the Activistic path till death, without taking to asceticism, in order to keep alive the course of Action, whereas the other seven mind-born sons of Brahmadeva, namely, Sanatkumāra and others, were born from birth free from Desire and followers of the Path of Renunciation (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 339 and 240). The explanation as to why those who had realised the Brahman, and even Brahmadeva himself, adopted this Activistic path (pravṛtti-mārga) of performing Action, has been given in the Vedānta-Sūtras in the

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following words: "yāvad adhikāram avasthitirādhikāriṇām" (Ve. Sū. 3.3.32), i.e., "until that which has been prescribed for a particular person by the Parameśvara has been completely performed, he does not escape the performance of Action". This explanation will be considered later on. Whatever the explanation may be, this much becomes dear, namely, that the two Paths of Action (pravṛtti), and Inaction (nivṛtti), were followed by sants from the very commencement of the world; and therefore, it is clear that one cannot decide as to which of the two is the better path merely from the conduct of sants.

But, the next argument of Asceticists is that, although one cannot, merely from the consideration of conduct, decide whether Inaction is better than Action, since the traditional conduct is in this way two-fold, yet, as it is clear that there is no Release until one has broken the bondage of Karma, it follows that it is more beneficial to discard the ties of desire-creating Karma, or Action, as early as possible after the acquisition of Knowledge. In the 'Śukānuśāsana' chapter of the Mahābhārata – this chapter is also known as 'Śukānupraśna' – the Path of Renunciation has been advocated; and there, to the following question made by Śuka to Vyāsa, namely,

yad idaṁ vedavacanāṁ kuru karma tyajeti ca ।  
kāṁ diśaṁ vidyayā yānti kāṁ ca gacchanti karmaṇā ॥  
(Śān. 240.1)

that is, "the Vedas enjoin the performance of Action, as also the Abandonment of Action; therefore, tell me what results are obtained by 'vidyā', that is, by Knowledge without Action, or by Action alone", Vyāsa in replying has said:–

karmaṇā badhyate jantur vidyayā tu pramucyate ।  
tasmāt karma na kurvanti yatayaḥ pāradarśinaḥ ॥  
(Śān. 240. 7)

that is, "by Karma, the created being is bound, and by Knowledge he is released; therefore, the through-seeing Yatis or ascetics, do not perform Action". I have already fully dealt with the first part of this stanza in the last chapter. There is not

the slightest dispute about the proposition: "karmaṇā  
badhyate jantur vidyayā tu

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pramucyate" And I have shown in that chapter that if one considers what is meant by the words "karmaṇā badhyate", one sees that, gross or lifeless Karma by itself does not either hind or release anybody; that, man is bound by Karma as a result of his Hope for Fruit, or by his own Attachment; and that, when this Attachment has been got rid of, a man stands Released, notwithstanding that he may be performing Action by his external organs. With this idea in mind, Śrī Rāmacandra says to Lakṣmaṇa in the Adhyātma-Rāmāyaṇa, that:—

pravāhapatitaḥ kāryaṁ kurvann api na lipyate ।

bāhye sarvatra kartṛtvam āvahann api rāghava ॥

that is, "the man who has fallen in the stream of saṁsāra (worldly life), which is the embodiment of Action, remains untouched, though he may externally perform all sorts of duties". When one considers this doctrine of the philosophy of the Absolute Self, one sees that it is no more necessary to abandon Action on the ground that it is productive of unhappiness, and that it is enough if one makes one's mind pure and equable, and gives up the hope of reward. In short, though there may be an opposition between Knowledge and

Desireful Action, no kind of opposition can exist between Knowledge and Desireless Action. Therefore, in the Anugītā, instead of the phrase "tasmāt karma na kurvanti", i.e., "therefore Actions are not performed", it is stated that:—

tasmāt karmasu niḥsnehā ye kecit pāradarśinaḥ ||  
(Aśva. 51.33.)

that is: "therefore, through-seeing scients are not attached to Action"; and before that sentence, there is a clear defence and advocacy of the Karma-Yoga in the following words, namely,

kurvate ye ta karmaṇi śraddadhānā vipaścitaḥ |  
anāśīryogasamṣyuktās te dhīraḥ sādharmaśinaḥ || (Aśva.  
50.67)

that is, "those scients, who, having faith, adopt the (Karma-) Yoga path and perform Actions without entertaining desire, are sādharmaśin" . In the same way, in the advice given by

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Śaunaka to Yudhiṣṭhira in the Vanaparva, there has been added to the following first part of the stanza,

yad idaṁ vedavacanam kuru karma tyajeti ca |

the following latter part, namely,

tasmād dharmān imān sarvān nābhimānāt samācaret ||  
(Vana. 2, 73).



that is, "though the Vedas enjoin both the performance of and the abandonment of Action, one should perform all one's duties (Karma) without entertaining the pride (of being the doer)"; and in the Śukānupraśna also, Vyāsa has in two places clearly said to Śuka that:—

eṣā pūrvatarā vṛttir brāhmaṇasya vidhīyate ।

jñānavān eva karmaṇi kurvan sarvatra sidhyati ॥ (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 237. 1; 334. 39.)

that is, "obtaining Release by acquiring Knowledge and also performing Actions, is the most ancient (pūrvatarā) method of Brahmins". It is clear that Karma combined with Jñāna, and after the acquisition of Jñāna, is intended by the words jñānavān eva. When one considers dispassionately these statements which support either side of the question, it becomes clear that the argument "karmaṇā badhyate jantuḥ", does not yield the only inference "tasmāt karma na kurvanti", i.e., "therefore, Actions are not performed", which supports Abandonment of Action, but also the equally important inference "tasmāt karmasu niḥsnehāḥ", i.e., "therefore, one does not become attached to Karma " – which is in support of Desireless Action. It is also not that I alone draw this two-fold inference of my own accord, but even Vyāsa himself has clearly expressed this meaning in the following verse from the Śukānupraśna , namely,

dvāv imāv atha panthānau yasmin vedaḥ pratiṣṭhitāḥ ।

pravṛttīlakṣaṇo dharmah nivṛttiś ca vibhāṣitaḥ || [1]  
(Ma, Bhā. Śān. 240. 6).

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that is, "such are the two modes of life, both of which are equally supported by the Vedas, – the one is the Activistic path, and the other is of Inaction, that is, of Renunciation". So also, as I have mentioned before, is it stated in the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine that these two paths have existed independently from the commencement of the world. But, as both these paths have been mentioned independently, as occasion arose, in the Mahābhārata, we find in one and the same Mahābhārata statements, which support the Path of Inaction, side by side with statements, which support the Path of Activism; and in the commentaries on the Gītā, which support the Path of Renunciation, the statements supporting the Path of Inaction have been referred to as the only important ones, as though there could be no other path, or as if any other path which might be possible, was either inferior, or only a preparatory step of the Path of Renunciation. But, this kind of

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[1] There are the following other readings of this part of the second line of the stanza, namely, 'nivṛttiś ca subhāṣitaḥ' and nivṛttiś ca vibhāṣitaḥ . Whichever reading is taken, the words "dvāṁ imāv" appear in the beginning in each reading, and from this, it is clear that these two paths are independent.

argument is only doctrinal; and on that account, though the meaning of the Gītā is clear and plain in itself, it has now-a-days become unintelligible to many. The stanza "dvāv imāv atha panthānau " etc., is of the same importance as the stanza "loke 'smin dvidvidhā niṣṭhā" (Gī. 3.3) in the Gītā; that is to say, one can clearly see the intention to refer in this place to two modes of life which are of equal value, But some persons, closing their eyes to this plain meaning, and to the previous and subsequent context, attempt to maintain that this verse indicates only one path and not two paths.

Though the Vedic religion thus falls into these two independent paths of Karma-Saṁnyāsa (Sāṁkhya) and Desireless Action (Yoga), yet, as the Gītā does not look upon them as equally good alternatives, but is of the firm opinion that 'the Karma-Yoga is superior to the Path of Renunciation', it further says, in support of the superiority of Karma-Yoga, that it will be impossible for us to abandon Karma, so long as the world in which we live, as also our very existence in it for even a single moment, is itself Karma; and if one has to live in this world, that is to say, in this land of Action, how

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can one escape Action? We see ourselves that thirst, hunger, and other desires do not leave us so long as our body lives (31.

5. 8, 9); and if the Path of Renunciation gives us the liberty of performing a disgraceful Action like begging for satisfying those desires, what prevents us from performing all other worldly Actions, prescribed by the Śāstras, with a desireless frame of mind? If a person wishes to give up the performance of these other Actions, fearing that he will lose the happiness of the Brahman, or forget his Non-Dualistic Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, by becoming bound up in the bonds of Karma, his mental control must be looked upon as still imperfect; and all Abandonment of Action made when the mental control is not perfect, is, according to the Gītā, the result of ignorance (moha) and is a tāmasa or futile act (Gī. 18.7; 3.6). Not only is this so, but it naturally follows that in order to perfect such imperfect mental control by means of the purification of the mind, such a man must continue to perform the Karma prescribed by the Śrutis or Smṛtis for a householder, such as, sacrificial ritual, charity etc., which promotes the desireless frame of mind. In short, such an Abandonment of Action is never meritorious. Well; if you say that the man's mind is unaffected by objects of pleasure and is under his control, then why should he be afraid of Karma, or, why should he take up the futile attitude of not-performing Action? Just as an umbrella made for protecting against rain, can be tested only in the rain, so also, or, by the comprehensive test of Kālidāsa:—

vikārahetau sati vikriyante ।

yeṣāṁ na cetāṁsi ta eva dhīraḥ || (Kumāra, 1.59)

that is: " that man, whose mind does not fall a prey to mental confusion, when the objects which create the emotions are in front of the eyes, may truly be said to be brave", is the control of the mind really tested by means of Karma; and the fact as to whether or not the mind has become perfect is ascertained not only by others, but also by the doer of the Actions himself. It, therefore, follows, even on this basis, that those Actions which befall one according to the injunctions

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of the Śāstras, that is to say, those Actions which befall one in the stream of life, must be performed (Gī. 18.6). If one says, "I am not afraid that the acquired purification of my mind will be affected by the performance of Action, because, my mind is under proper control; but I do not wish to waste my time in the performance of Action, and thereby unnecessarily tire my body, if it is not necessary to do so for obtaining Release", such an abandonment of Action, which is due to the contemptible fear of troubling the body, becomes a 'rājasā' abandonment, and the fruit or good result to be obtained by Abandonment of Action, is not obtained by the man who abandons Action in this way (Gī. 18.8). Then why is Action to be abandoned at all '! If someone says that it is not proper for the Self, which pertains to the permanent world of the Brahman, to take part

in Action, which pertains to the Māyā-world and is non-permanent, even such an objection is not proper; because, if the Paramātmān Itself is covered by Māyā, where is the objection for a man to be clothed in Māyā in the same way? Just as there are the two divisions, of the world, namely, the Brahman-world and the Māyā-world, so also are there the two divisions of the Self and of the corporeal organs in the case of a human being. Out of these, couple the Self with the Brahman, merge the Self in the Brahman, and, keeping your mind unattached in this way, by realising the- identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, perform all the activities in the Māyā-world by the Māyic corporeal organs; that is all When one behaves in this way, not only will there be no obstruction to one's obtaining Release, but further, the proper portions will be joined together, and one will not incur the blame of not having shown proper respect to, or having disjointed, any portion of the creation; and one will obtain the merit of having performed one's duty both in the Māyā-world and in the Brahman-world— this world and the next. This is the theory which has been supported in the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad (Īśā. 11). But, these statements from the Śrutis will be considered in detail later on. For the time being, I will only say that the statement in the Gītā, that the scientists, who realise the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, perform all activities in the illusory world merely by their body or merely

by their organs (Gī. 4.21; 5.12), means the same thing; and the propositions in the Gītā (Gī. 18.9), that "the true sātṭvika Abandonment of Action consists in performing Actions with an unattached frame of mind, without entertaining the hope of reward, and merely as a duty", and that "the non-performance of Action is not the true abandonment of Action", have been made to bring out this idea. Though Karma belongs to the Māyā-world, the Parameśvara has created it for some-unintelligible reason; and, it is not within the power of any human being to stop it; it is within the power only of the Parameśvara to do so; and there is no doubt that the performance of Actions merely by the body, keeping the Reason unattached, does not prevent a person from obtaining Release. Then, where is the objection to performing the Actions prescribed by the Śāstras through the medium solely of the organs and being renounced in Mind? It is said in the Gītā that, "na hi kaścit kṣaṇam api jātu tiṣṭhaty akarmakṛt" (Gī. 3.5; 18.11), i.e., "in this world, no one can for a single moment remain without performing Action"; and, in the Anugītā, that "naiṣkarmyaṁ na ca loke 'smin muhūrtam api labhyate" (Aśva. 20.7), i.e., "in this world, there is no escape from Karma (for anybody) even for a single moment". Not only men, but even. the Sun and the Moon are continually performing Action! Nay: as it is definite that Karma is nothing but the creation, and that the creation is nothing but Karma, we ourselves see that the activities of the world, that is to say, Karma, does not rest for a

moment. The Blessed Lord has said in the Bhagavadgītā (Gī. 3.8) that, "if one gives up Action, it will be impossible to get food to eat, and Draupadi has said to Yudhiṣṭhira in the Mahābhārata that "akarmaṇām vai bhūtānām vṛttiḥ syān na hi kācana" (Vana. 32. 8), i.e., "living beings cannot exist without performing Action"; and accordingly, even Śrī Samartha Rāmadāsa Svāmi says in the Dāsabodha, after having referred to the Knowledge of the Brahman, that: "if one tries to reach the highest goal, giving up the activities of life | one will not get even food to eat" | (Dā. 12.1.3). And, if one considers the life of the Blessed Lord Himself, He is" seen to be performing the Action of helping saints and destroying villains in this illusory world from Yuga to Yuga

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by taking up various incarnations (Gī. 4.8. and Ma. Bhā. Śān. 339.103); and the Blessed Lord has Himself said in the Gītā, that if He did not perform these Actions, the world would become desolate and be destroyed (Gī. 3. 24). If the Blessed Lord Himself is, in this -way, performing Actions for the - maintenance of the world, it clearly follows that there is no sense in saying that the performance of Action after the - acquisition of Knowledge is useless. Therefore, the Blessed Lord advises everybody in the name of Arjuna, according to "the rule, "yaḥ kriyāvān sa paṇḍitaḥ" (Ma. Bhā. Vana. 312.108), i.e. "that man is the truly learned man, who is a doer", that -



since nobody in this world can escape Karma, one must perform all the duties which befall one according to one's own status in life, giving up the desire for fruit, that is, with one's mind in a state of renunciation, in order that one should not be affected by Karma; and that this is the only and the best way (Yoga) which is possible for man. Matter (prakṛti) will always go on performing its activities; but when one gives up the egotistical idea that he is the performer of the Action, one is Released (Gī. 3.27; 13.29; 14.19; 18.16). Not only is the non-performance of Action, or Renunciation in the shape of the Abandonment of Action (as prescribed by the Sāṃkhya), not necessary to obtain Release, but it is never possible to entirely abandon Action in this world of Action.

To this, some persons raise a further objection, that though it may not be necessary to abandon Action for breaking the bondage of Karma, and it may be enough to merely give up the desire for the fruit of Karma, yet, when the mind has become desireless as a result of the acquisition of Knowledge, and all desires have been destroyed, there remains nothing which will provoke one to perform Action; and therefore, if not as a result of the fear of unnecessarily taxing the body, at least as a result of the destruction of Desire, Karma comes to an end of itself. The highest goal of a man in this world is the obtaining of Release; and, as the man who has obtained such Release by means of Knowledge has no more any 'eṣāṇā' (desire) for children, wealth, or heaven (Bṛ. 3.5.1 and 4.4.22), it is the

natural, inherent and ultimate result of such Jñāna, that Karma should leave such a person, although he may not wish

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to give it up. That is why it is stated in the Uttaragītā that:

jñānāmṛtena tṛptasya kṛtakṛtyasya yoginaḥ ।  
na cāsti kiṁcit kartavyam asti cen na sa tattvavit ॥  
(Uttara. 1, 23).

that is, "for that man who has become Accomplished (kṛtakṛtya), as a result of having drunk the nectar of Knowledge, no further duty remains; and if any further duty remains, that man is not a real 'tattvavit', i.e., Jñānin". [1] And if this is looked upon as a fault in a Jñānin, that is wrong. As a matter of fact, Śrī. Śaṁkarācārya has said that this is an ornament of the person. who has acquired the Knowledge of the Brahman – "alaṅkāro hy ayam asmākaṁ yad brahmātmāvagatau satyāṁ sarvakartavyatāhāniḥ" (Ve. Sū. Śāṁ. Bhā. 1.1.4). So also, are there such: statements in the Gītā as, "tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate" (Gī. 3.17), i.e., "for the

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[1] The idea that this verse is from the Śruti is not correct. It. does not appear in the Śaṁkara-bhāṣya on the Vedānta-Sūtras; but it has been taken by Śaṁkarācārya in his Bhāṣya on the Sanatsujātīya, and it is there stated to be from the Liṅga-purāṇa. It is dearly not in support of Karma-Yoga, but of the Saṁnyāsa-mārga. There are. similar statements in Buddhistic works (See the Appendix).

Jñānin, nothing remains to be done"; or, "for him, there is no necessity of the Vedic Karma-ritual" (Gī. 2.46); or, "yogārūḍhasya tasyaiva śamaḥ kāraṇam ucyate" (Gī. 6.3), i.e., "when once a man has become steeped in the Yoga, abandonment (śama) becomes necessary (kāraṇa) for him"; and such adjectives as "sarvārambhaparitāgī" (Gī. 12.16), i.e., "one who has given up all activities" and "aniketaḥ" (Gī. 12.19), i.e., "one who has no home" etc. have been used in the Gītā with reference to a Jñānin. Some persons, therefore, think that the Bhagavadgītā accepts the position that Karma leaves a man of its own accord, after the acquisition of Knowledge, But, in my opinion, these meanings ascribed to these words and sentences in the Gītā, as also the arguments mentioned above, are not correct. I will, therefore, set out here in short what I have to say to the contrary.

As I have already shown above in the chapter on Happiness and Unhappiness, the Gītā does not accept the position, that when a man has acquired Knowledge, all his wishes or desires.

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must necessarily have come to an end. There is no unhappiness in merely having a desire or a wish, and the true root of unhappiness is the Attachment, which is part of the Desire. Therefore, the doctrine of the Gītā is, that instead of

killing desires of all kinds, one should only give up the Attachment to the objects of desire, and go on performing all Actions. It is not -that when this Attachment is given up, activity must also be simultaneously given up. Nay, it is impossible that activity should come to an end, though Desire may have come to an end; and we see that whether there is Desire or not, everyday .Actions like breathing etc. continue. But why go so far? Remaining alive, even for a single moment, is an Action by itself: and though a man may have acquired perfect Knowledge, this living does not come to an end by his desire or by the destruction of his desires. It is a matter of everybody's experience, that no Jñānin commits suicide because he has acquired Knowledge; and that is why the Gītā says that "na hi kaścit kṣaṇam api jātu tiṣṭhaty akarmakṛt" (Gī. 3.5), i.e., "no one, whoever he is, can remain without performing Action". 'The first doctrine of the Karma-Yoga in the Gītā is, that in this world of Action, Action is something which befalls everyone naturally, and that it is not only a part of the stream of life, but also inevitable, and not dependent on the desire of man. When it has thus been proved that there is no mutual and permanent relationship between Desire and Action, the statement, that Karma must come to an end simultaneously with the destruction of desire, falls to the ground of itself; and then the question naturally arises as to in what way the scientist (Jñānin) should perform those Actions, which befall him even after the destruction of Desire. The reply to this question is given in the third chapter of the Gītā (See Gī.

3.17 – 19, and my commentary on it). The Gītā accepts the position that there remains no duty for the Jñānin, after the acquisition of Knowledge, as of his own. But it goes further and says that no man, whoever he may be, escapes Action. The two propositions that the Jñānin (scient) is free from duty and that he does not escape Karma, appear to some persons mutually contradictory. But the same is not the case with the Gītā. It harmonises them by saying that in as much as Karma is

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unavoidable, the scient must perform it even after the acquisition of Knowledge; but, in as much as a Jñānin has no more any duty for his own Self, it now becomes necessary for him to perform all his duties desirelessly. In short, the word 'tasya' (that is, 'for the Jñānin') in the line "tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate", in the seventeenth stanza of the third chapter is more important than the words "kāryaṁ na vidyate"; and the sum and substance of the stanza is, that as there is nothing more to be got by a Jñānin 'as for himself ', he must thereafter, that is, after the acquisition of Knowledge, perform his duties desirelessly; and the same purport has been conveyed^ to Arjuna by the words, "tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samācara" (Gī. 3.19), i.e., "therefore, go on performing whatever duties have befallen you, according to the injunction of the Śāstras, without becoming attached to the Karma, and do not give up the Karma ", by using the cause-denoting word

'tasmāt' in the beginning of the stanza. When this relation of data and conclusion between the seventeenth and the nineteenth verses of the third chapter, as also the entire context of the chapter, is taken into account, it will be seen that it is not correct to take the words "tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate" as an independent proposition, as is done by the supporters of the Path of Renunciation. The best proof of this position are the following illustrations. In support of the proposition that one has to perform all the duties which befall one as a result of the injunctions of the Śāstras, even after the acquisition of Knowledge, though no duty for one's own benefit remains, the Blessed Lord says immediately afterwards that:-

na me pārthāsti kartavyaṁ triṣu lokeṣu kimcana ।  
nānavāptam avāptavyaṁ varta eva ca karmaṇi ॥ (Gī.  
3.22).

that is: "O Pārtha, there is not (remaining) for Me any duty which is Mine in this three-fold universe, nor is there (in Me any desire to obtain) anything which has not been obtained by Me; see that I am also nevertheless performing Karma". The words, "na me kartavyam asti ", i.e., "for me, no duty has remained " in this stanza have been said with reference to the words, "tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate", i.e., "for him, there

remains no duty", in the former stanza (Gī. 8.17); and, therefore, it is quite clear that these four or five stanzas bear out the proposition that, "though no duty may have remained as a result of the acquisition of Knowledge, yet, and even for that very reason, one must perform all the duties prescribed by the Sastras, with an unattached frame of mind". Otherwise, His own illustration given by the Blessed Lord far emphasising the doctrine enunciated in the stanza, "tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate", becomes totally out of place; and the impossible position of the enunciated doctrine being different from the illustration given, will arise. In order to get over this impassible position. His commentators, who follow the Renunciation school, interpret the word 'tasmāt' , in the sentence "tasmāḍ asaktaḥ satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samācara", in quite a different way. According to them, the main doctrine of the Bhagavadgītā is that the scient mast give up Action, But Arjuna was not a scient; therefore – 'tasmāt' – the Blessed Lord has enjoined him to perform Karma, But as I have already explained above, tie argument that Arjuna was still ignorant, after having heard the Gītā, is incorrect. Besides, even though the meaning of the word 'tasmāt' may be thus stretched, the illustration about Himself given by the Blessed Lord, in support of the main proposition, by the words, "na me pārthā 'sti kartavyam etc.", i.e., "I am performing Action, although no duty is left for Me for My own benefit", cannot be properly explained in the same way. Therefore, the word 'tasya' in the sentence "tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate" must be considered

important instead of the words "kāryaṁ na vidyate": and when that is done, the sentence "tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samācara" must be interpreted as meaning: "you are a scientist; and, therefore, it is true that there is no Karma left for you for your own personal benefit; but, for the very reason that such Karma is not necessary for your own benefit, do whatever duties befall you according to the Śāstras, with the feeling 'this is not for me', that is, with a desireless frame of mind". In short, according to the Gītā, the idea 'this is not for me' does not become a reason for not performing Karma, and we have to draw the inference, that as Action is unavoidable

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therefore, this unavoidable Action, which has been prescribed by the Śāstras, must be performed with a self-sacrificing frame of mind; and, considering the matter from the point of view of consistency, the same meaning has to be adopted. This is the great and important difference between Renunciation of Action (Karma-Saṁnyāsa) and Energism (Karma-Yoga). Those who follow the Renunciation school say: "nothing has remained for you to do; therefore, do nothing"; and the Gītā says: "nothing has remained for you to do, for your own benefit; and, therefore, do henceforth whatever you have to do, giving up selfish desires, and with an unattached frame of mind". Why should two such different inferences arise from one and the same sentence ? The only reply to this is, that as



the Gītā considers Karma as unavoidable, the conclusion, 'therefore, give up Action', cannot at all arise according to the philosophy of the Gītā. Therefore, the Gītā has drawn the conclusion that Action should be performed, giving up selfish desires, from the data 'it is not for your benefit.' The argument adopted by Vaśiṣṭha in the Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha, after he had preached the Knowledge of the Brahman to Rāma, for inducing him to perform Desireless Action is the same; and the above-mentioned doctrine of the Bhagavadgītā has been adopted literally at the end of the Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha (See Yo. 6. U. 199 and 216.14; and my commentary on the translation of Gī. 3.19). The teaching of the Gītā has been adopted in the Buddhistic religion in the sacred books of the Mahāyāna sect, in the same way as it has been adopted in the Yoga-Vaśiṣṭha. But, I have not dealt with that matter here, as it will be straying from the subject, and I have considered it later in the Appendix.

When a man has got the Knowledge of the Ātman, the individualistic language of 'I' and 'mine' does not remain (Gī. 18.16 and 26); and therefore, the Jñānin is said to be 'nir-mama'. 'nir-mama' means, one who does not say, 'mine', 'mine' (mama); and Jñāneśvara Mahārāja has conveyed the same idea in describing the Jñānin in the following stanza (omvīm):

He does not know the word 'I'  
he does not say of anything that it is 'mine'

Experience of pain and happiness

for him there is none. (Jñā. 12. 149. See p. 346 above).

But, it must not be forgotten that although the feeling of 'I' or 'mine' may be got rid of, as a result of the Knowledge of the Brahman, their place is taken by the words 'the world' and 'for the world' – or speaking in the language of Devotion, by the words 'the Parameśvara', and 'of the Parameśvara'. Every ordinary human being in the world carries out all his activities with the feeling of 'mine', or, 'for my benefit'. But, as that man who has become a scient, has lost his 'mine-ness' (mamatva'), he begins to perform all the activities in the world created by the Īśvara with the feeling (the mine-less, i.e., nir-mama feeling) that they are of the Parameśvara, and that the Parameśvara has created him for performing them: this is the difference between the Jñānin and the Ajñānin (Gī. 3.27, 28). When one takes into account this doctrine of the Gītā, the plain meaning of the words, " 'śama' becomes a 'kāraṇa' to the person who has become steeped in Yoga", becomes apparent (See. Gī. 6.3 and my commentary on it). Some commentators on the Gītā interpret this stanza as meaning that, the man, who has become steeped in Yoga, should thereafter take to 'śama' that is, 'śānti', and do nothing else. But this meaning is not correct, 'śama' means 'peace of mind'; and instead of describing that 'śama' as the ultimate 'result' (kārya), it is said in this stanza that this 'śama' or 'śānti' is the 'cause' (kāraṇa) of

something else— "śamaḥ kāraṇam ucyate". Therefore, 'śama' must be considered as a 'kāraṇa' (cause), and we must see what the 'kārya' (result) of it is. If one considers the previous and subsequent context, it becomes clear that that result (kārya) is 'Karma'; and then this stanza has to be interpreted as meaning, that the Yogin should make his mind peaceful, and perform all his further activities by means of that śama or śānti (peace); and one cannot interpret it, as has been done by the commentators, as meaning that 'the Yogin (yogārūḍha) should give up Karma'. In the same way, the words "sarvārambhaparitāgī" and "aniketaḥ" must be interpreted as indicating the Abandonment of the Hope of Fruit, rather than the Abandonment

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of the Action itself, as has been shown by me in my commentary attached to the translations of the verses in the various places. The second illustration given by the Blessed Lord in addition to His own, for proving the proposition that the Jñānin must perform all the various duties prescribed for the four castes, giving up the Hope for Fruit, and according to the Śāstras, is that of Janaka. Janaka was a Karma-yogin of a very high order. He had become unselfish to such a great extent that he is said to have uttered the words: "mithilāyām pradīptāyā na, me dahyati kiṃcana" (Śān. 275. 4 and 219. 50), i.e., "I will not feel it at all, even if the capital of my kingdom is

burnt"; and in explaining why he was still carrying on the activities of ruling, though he had no selfish interest or advantage or disadvantage of his left, Janaka himself says:—

devebhyāś ca pitṛbhyāś ca bhūtebhyo 'tithibhiḥ saha ।  
ity arthaṁ sarva evaite samārambhā bhavanti vai ॥  
(Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 32.24)

that is, "all these activities are going on for the benefit of the gods, of the ancestors, of all created beings (bhūta), and of my guests, and not for myself". It need not be said that if noble souls like Janaka and Śrī Kṛṣṇa do not come forward for the benefit of the world, when no duty of any kind is left for their own benefit, or when they have no desire to obtain any particular thing for themselves, this world will become desolate — "utsīdeyur ime lokāḥ" (Gī. 3.24).

Some people say that there is not much of a difference between the doctrine of the Gītā that the desire for the fruit must be given up, and that it is not necessary to give up desires of all kinds, and the doctrine of the Destruction of Desire; because, as there is no stimulus left towards Action, whether it is Desire which is destroyed, or the hope for the fruit which is destroyed, the ultimate result of Karma being given up, follows in either case. But, this objection is based on ignorance, that is to say, it is raised because the true meaning of the words 'hope for fruit' (phalāśā) has not been understood. Giving up the hope for fruit, does not mean giving

up all kinds of Desire, or entertaining the desire that nobody should get the fruit of one's Action, or that if somebody gets

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it, he should not enjoy it. As has been stated by me above in the fifth chapter, the words ' phalāśā' , 'saṅga' or 'kāma' have been used in the Gītā to indicate the ATTACHMENT (āśakti) or INSISTENCE (āgraha) that, 'I am doing this particular Action in order that the fruit of it must accrue to ME'. But, though one does not entertain the AMBITION, or the INSISTENCE, or the vain Attachment, that the fruit should be obtained, it does not follow that the desire, and also the enthusiasm, to do a particular thing which has fallen on one's shoulders, as a duty, should also disappear with this insistence. It is true that those persons, who do not see anything in this world except their own benefit, and who are continually steeped in performing Actions merely by the ambition of reaping some fruit or other, will not believe that it is possible to perform Actions, giving up the hope for fruit. But, the same is not the case with those persons, whose mind has- become equable, and is in a state of Renunciation as a result of Knowledge. In the first place, the belief that the fruit which one obtains for a particular Action, is the fruit of that Action, is itself wrong. If there is not the assistance of the liquidity of water, or of the heat of fire, it will not be possible for man to cook anything, in spite of all his efforts; and the possessing or not possessing of these qualities

by fire etc. is not something, which is within the control of man, or subject to his efforts. Therefore, a man has to make all his various efforts, after having first acquired the knowledge of these self-existent activities in the world of Action, and of the way in which these various activities will become helpful to his own efforts. Therefore, whatever fruit is obtained by a man by his own Action, is not actually the fruit of his Action, but must be said to be the fruit of the union of his Action with the self-existent forces existing in the world of Action, which are promotive of his efforts. But, it very often happens that a man has not acquired a complete knowledge of all these various natural activities, the promotiveness of which is, in this way, necessary to make his efforts successful; and in some cases, it is impossible for him to acquire this knowledge. This is known as DESTINY. If the assistance of natural activities, which are not within our control and which may not even be known

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to us, is thus necessary in order that success should crown our efforts, believing that 'I will do a particular thing purely by my own efforts' is naturally an extremely foolish belief (Gī. 18.14 – 16); because, in as much as the fruit to be obtained by the co-operation between the known and the unknown activities of the natural world of Action and the efforts of man, is the result of the laws of Action (Karma), there will not be the slightest difference, so far as the success of the effort goes whether one

entertains the desire for fruit, or does not entertain it; and there is only the chance of one's hope for the fruit causing one unhappiness. Nevertheless, the activities of Nature do not of their own accord bring about that thing which a man wants. As it is necessary to add salt to the flour, in order to make the bread palatable, so also is it necessary to add some human effort, more or less, to these self-existent activities of the Natural world of Action, in order that they should become beneficial to man. Therefore, those persons, who are scientists and discriminators, do not entertain any Attachment or ambition about the fruit of their Action, and perform the small or big portion of Śāstra-enjoined Action which is destined for them, consistently with their authority, in the eternal course of Karma (pravāha-patita), in order to carry on the activities of the world; and they rely on the co-operation (saṁyoga) between Action (Karma) and Destiny (Dharma), so far as the question of the success of the effort goes; or, speaking in the language of Devotion, they rely on the desire of the Parameśvara, so far as that matter goes. This is what is implied in the advice: "Your authority extends only to the performance of Action; obtaining the result is not a matter which you can control" (Gī. 2.47), given by the Blessed Lord to Arjuna. When one goes on performing Action, without entertaining any hope for the fruit, one does not have any reason for feeling unhappy about the fruitlessness of the Action, if for any reason it becomes fruitless, as one has performed the duty of doing the Action, which is the only thing within one's control. For

instance, the science of Medicine tells us, that unless the thread of life (that is, the inherent strength of the vital elements in the body) is strong, a patient never gets well merely by Medicines; and, as the strength of this thread is the result of

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many pre-destined or hereditary causes, that is a matter which is outside the control of the doctor, and it is even impossible for him to definitely calculate the quantity of that strength- Yet, we actually see, that considering it his duty to give medicine to his patients, a doctor medicates thousands of patients in this way, to the extent of his abilities, and purely with the intention of doing good to others. When a doctor has thus disinterestedly performed his duty of giving medicine, not only does he not become despondent, if a particular patient is not cured, but he even draws up with a peaceful mind the statistics, that a particular percentage of patients is cured by a particular medicine. But, when the son of that same doctor falls ill, and he has to give medicine to him, he forgets the fact that there is such a thing as 'the thread of life,' and becoming confused by the selfish Hope of Fruit, in the shape of the idea that 'my son must get well', he calls in another doctor to treat his son, or at any rate for consultation. This simple illustration will explain what is meant by the selfish Attachment to the Result of Action, and how it is possible to perform some Action



merely as a duty, even when there is no hope as regards the result- It is true that in order that the Hope for result may thus be destroyed, the mind has to be imbued with Renunciation, by means of Knowledge. But, just as when one is asked to take away the colour (characteristic) from a piece of cloth, it does not become necessary to destroy the cloth, so also, when it is said that one should not entertain Desire, Attachment, or Low in the matter of Action, it does not follow that Action itself should be given up. If it were to become impossible to perform Action as a result of Renunciation, that would be a different matter. But, not only is it possible to perform Action, in spite of Renunciation, but also, as we ourselves see, nobody can at any time escape Karma. Therefore, the true principle of leading one's life, from the point of view of Ethics, and. from the point of view of Release, is that the scient should, after acquisition of Knowledge, perform those very Actions, which are performed by the ignorant with a Hope for Result, but looking upon advantage or disadvantage, happiness or unhappiness as one and the same (Gī. 2.38); and courageously

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and enthusiastically, but with a pure Reason, that is, being renounced or indifferent in the matter of the fruit (Gī. 18.26) and with a peaceful mind, according to his own authority, and purely as a matter of duty (Gī. 6.3). This is the course of Action, which has been adopted by numerous Steady-in- minds

(sthitaprajña), by devotees of the Blessed Lord, by parsons who have acquired the highest knowledge, nay, even by the Blessed Lord Himself; and the highest goal of man consists in this Path of Energism (Karma-Yoga); and the Bhagavadgītā proclaims in unquestionable terms that ultimate Release results from this 'Yoga' on account of the worship of and meditation on the Parameśvara which it entails (Gī. 18.46). If in spite of this, someone intentionally mis- understands the matter, we must look upon him as unfortunate. Spencer did not accept the Metaphysical point of view. Yet if he has in his book called the Study of Sociology come to the conclusion, that since, even from the Materialistic point of view, it is not possible for a man to cause anything to happen at once in this world, and human efforts are fruitful, fruitless, or more or less fruitful in proportion to the way in which the hundreds of other causative things, which are necessary for it to happen, have happened previously, the wise man must go on performing his duties peacefully and enthusiastically without entertaining any Desire for Result of Action, though the ordinary man is induced to perform the Action only by desire for the fruit – which is the same as what the Gītā says. [1]

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[1] "thus admitting that for the fanatic, some wild anticipation is needful as a stimulus; and recognising the usefulness of his delusion as adapted to his particular nature and his particular function, the man of higher type must be content with greatly moderated expectations, while he perseveres with undiminished efforts. He has to see how comparatively little can be done, and yet to find it worthwhile to do that little: so uniting philanthropic energy with philosophic calm" – Spencer's Study

Even if it is thus proved that the scient must, so long as life lasts, desirelessly perform all the duties, which befall him in the course of life, having given up the Hope for Result, the

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subject matter of Kama-Yoga is not exhausted -unless it is explained why, and for what purpose, these Actions at all come into existence. And, therefore, the last and the most important direction of the Blessed Lord to Arjuna in support of the doctrine of Karma-Yoga is that: " lokasaṁgraham evā 'pi saṁpaśyan kartum arhasi" (Gī. 3.20), i.e., " even having regard to public benefit (lokasaṁgraha), you must perform these Actions". Public benefit does not mean 'making societies of men' or 'making a farce of performing Action like other people, though one has the right to abandon Action, in order that ignorant people should not give up Action, and in order to

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of Sociology, 8th Ed. p.403. (The italics are ours;. If, in this sentence, one substitute the words 'maddened by the qualities of Matter' (Gī. 3.29), or, 'befooled by Individuation (ahamkāra)' (Gī. 3.27), or, the word ' fool ' used by. the dramatist Bhāsa (see p.430 above ~Translator.) for the word 'fanatic', and one substitutes the word 'vidvān' (scient) (Gī. 5.25) for the words 'man of higher type', and the words 'indifference towards the fruit of Action,' or 'abandonment of the fruit of Action', for the words 'greatly moderated expectations', one may almost say that Spencer has copied the doctrine of the Gītā.

please them'; because, the object of the Gītā is not that people should remain ignorant, or that scientists should make a farce of performing Action, only in order to keep them ignorant. Far from any hypocrisy being advised, when Arjuna was not satisfied by arguments which would have been conclusive for ordinary people, such as, "people will sing YOUR disgrace" (Gī. 2.34) etc., the Blessed Lord goes on to give more weighty and philosophically more powerful arguments. Therefore, the word 'saṁgraha', which has been defined in dictionaries to mean 'protecting,' 'keeping', 'regulating' etc., has in this placate been taken in all those meanings according to the context; and when that is done 'lokasaṁgraha' (public benefit) means "blading men together, and protecting, maintaining and regulating them in such a way that they might acquire that strength which results from mutual co-operation, thereby putting them on the path of acquiring merit while maintaining their good condition." The words 'welfare of a nation' have been used in the same sense in the Manu-Smṛti (7.144) and the word 'lokasaṁgraha' has been defined in the

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Śāṁkarabhāṣya as meaning

"lokasyonmārgapravṛttinivāraṇam" (i.e., "weaning men from the tendency to take to the path of wrong"); and from this it will be clear, that my interpretation of that word as meaning "making wise, those persons who behave recklessly as a result

of ignorance, and keeping them together in a happy state, and putting them on the path of . self-amelioration" is neither strange nor without authority The word 'saṁgraha' has been explained in this way. I must now make it clear that the word 'loka' in 'lokasaṁgraha' does not indicate only mankind. It is true that the word 'lokasaṁgraha' ordinarily means 'the benefit of human beings', as man is superior to the other created beings in the world" Yet, in as much as the Blessed Lord also desires that the bhūrloka, satyaloka, pitṛloka, devaloka, and the several other loka or worlds, which have been created by Him, should also be properly maintained and go on in a proper way, I must say that the word 'lokasaṁgraha' has, in this place, the comprehensive meaning that the activities of all these various spheres should go on properly in the same way as those of mankind, (lokasaṁgraha = lokānām saṁgrahaḥ, i.e., the maintenance of various worlds). The description given above by Janaka of the way in which he performed his duties refers to the sphere of gods and the sphere of ancestors; and it is stated in the description of the cycle of Yajñas (sacrificial ritual), which has been given in the third chapter of the Bhagavadgītā, and in the Nārāyaṇīyopākhyāna of the Mahābhārata, that Brahmadeva has created the Yajña in order that the sphere of humans, as also the sphere of gods, should be maintained (Gī. 3.10 – 12). From this, it becomes clear that "the word 'lokasaṁgraha' has been used in the Bhagavadgītā to mean the maintenance, not only of human beings, but that the human and all the other

spheres, such as of the gods etc., should be maintained, and that they should become mutually beneficial. This authority or right of the Blessed Lord of performing lokasaṁgraha by maintaining the entire universe in this way, is acquired by a man when he becomes a Jñānin as a result of the acquisition of Knowledge. Whatever is considered proper by a Jñānin, is also considered proper by other people, and they behave accordingly (Gī. 3.21); because, ordinary people

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believe that it is the right of Jñānin (scients) to consider with a peaceful and equable mind, in what way the maintenance and- uplift of the entire world can best be carried on, and to lay down the rules of Ethics accordingly; and such a belief is not ill-founded. Nay, one may even say that ordinary people put faith in Jñānin in this matter, because they themselves do- not understand these things correctly. It is for expressing the same idea that Bhīṣma has said to Yudhiṣṭhira in the Śāntiparva that:-

lokasaṁgrakasaṁyuktaṁ vidhātrā vihitāṁ purā |  
sūkṣmadharmārthanīyataṁ satāṁ caritam uttamam ||  
(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 258.25)

that is, "Brahmadeva himself has created the most excellent lives of saints in order to explain which path of duty should be

adopted on critical occasions, as being universally beneficial". It, therefore, follows that lokasaṁgraha does not mean some humbug or other, or, a trick for keeping people in ignorance, but means one of the important duties created by Brahmadeva for saints; because, the world is likely to be destroyed if Action based on Knowledge disappears from the world. The same purport is conveyed by the following words of the Blessed Lord, namely, "if I do not perform this Action, all these 'loka' that is, spheres, will be destroyed" (3.24). The scientists are the eyes of the world; and if they give up their duties, the world will become blind, and cannot but be destroyed. It is the scientists who have to make people wise and ameliorate their condition. But, such a thing cannot be done by mere oral directions, that is, by mere advice; because, as we always see it in the world, if someone merely preaches the Knowledge of the Brahman to those people, who are not in the habit of behaving righteously, and whose minds are not purified, they misapply the knowledge, saying, "what is yours is mine, and what is mine is also mine". Besides, it is usual for people to test the correctness of the advice given by a particular person by reference to his own behaviour. Therefore, if the scientist does not perform Action himself, that becomes an excuse for ordinary people to become idle. This is what is meant by 'buddhi-bheda' (difference of vision); and in order that such a

difference of vision should not arise, and that people should become really desireless, and should be alive to their duties, it is the duty (not the hypocrisy) of scientists to remain in worldly life and to give a living lesson to ordinary people of moral behaviour (sadācaraṇa), that is, of living their lives desirelessly, by showing them their own behaviour. Therefore, the Gītā says that a scientist never acquires the right to give up Action, and that it is necessary for him to perform the various duties which have been enjoined for the four castes, for promoting universal benefit, if not for their own benefit. But, as the followers of the school of Renunciation are of opinion that the Jñānin need not perform the activities enjoined on the various castes, with a desireless frame of mind, or need not even perform them at all, the commentators belonging to this school of thought, have made a mess of the doctrine of the Gītā, that a scientist must go on performing Actions for universal benefit; and they seem to be prepared to indirectly, if not directly, suggest that the Blessed Lord has Himself given only hypocritical advice!' But, it becomes clear from the previous and subsequent context that this forceless interpretation of the word 'lokasaṁgraha' used in the Gītā, is not correct. The Gītā does not in the first place admit the position that the Jñānin has got a right to give up Action; and lokasaṁgraha is the most important reason out of the various reasons adduced in the Gītā for the Jñānin not doing so. It is, therefore, absolutely unjust to first take it for granted that a Jñānin can give up Action and then to interpret the word lokasaṁgraha as



meaning something hypocritical. Man has not come into this world merely for his own benefit. It is true that ordinary people are engrossed in selfish activities as a result of ignorance. But, if a man, to whom the whole world has become identified with himself as " sarvabhūtaṣṭham ātmānaṁ sarvabhūtāni cātmani", i.e., "I am in all created beings, and all created beings are in me", says: "Release has been attained by ME, now why should I care if everybody else is unhappy? ", he will be degrading his own Knowledge by his own mouth. Is the Ātman of a scientist something which is independent or individual? So long as his Ātman was covered by the cloak of ignorance, the difference between 'I' and

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'the world ' existed; but after the acquisition of Knowledge, the Ātman of the world becomes his own Ātman; and therefore, Vāsiṣṭha has said to Rāma in the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha that:—

yāvad lokaparāmarśo nirūḍho nāsti yoginaḥ ।

tāvad rūḍkasamādhitvaṁ na bhavaty eva nirmadam ॥

(Yo. 6. Pu. 128. 9?)

that is, "so long as the duty of looking after other people (that is of lokasaṁgraha) remains to howsoever small an extent, it cannot be said that the state of the person, who has attained Yoga, has become free from blame". For such a man to

become engrossed in the happiness of meditation, is to some extent like attending only to his own selfish needs. The chief fault in the argument of the supporters of the school of Renunciation, is that they disregard this factor. It is not possible to come across anyone who is more a Jñānin, more desireless, or more fully a Yogin, than the Blessed Lord. But if even the Blessed Lord Himself takes incarnations from time to time for universal benefit, e. g., for "the protection of saints, the destruction of villains, and the re-establishment of religion (dharma)", (Gī. 4.8), it would be totally improper for a Jñānin to give up universal welfare, and say: "that Parameśvara who has created all these various spheres, will maintain them in any way He likes; that is no part of my duty"; because, after the acquisition of Knowledge, the difference of 'Parameśvara', 'I' and 'the world' does not remain; and if such a difference remains, then such a man is not a Jñānin: he is a hypocrite. If a Jñānin becomes uniform with the Parameśvara as a result of Jñāna, how will he escape the necessity of performing that Action which is performed by the Parameśvara, in the same way as it is performed by the Parameśvara, that is, desirelessly (Gī. 3.22 and 4.14 and 15)? Besides, whatever the Parameśvara has to do, has to be done by Him through the medium of scientists. Therefore, active noble sentiments, full of sympathy towards all created beings, must arise in the mind of the man who has had the direct Realisation of the form of the Parameśvara in the shape of the feeling that 'there is only one

Ātman in all created beings'; and the trend of his mind must naturally be

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towards universal welfare. The Saint Tukārāma has with; that intention described the characteristic features of a saint- by the following words:—

Of them who are unhappy and in distress

he who says that they are his  
That man should be recognised as a saint  
know that God is in such a man (Gā. 960.1 – 2)

Or,

He who spends his energies in doing good to others  
has realised the true state of the Ātman (Gā. 4563).

And he has described Saints, that is, those noble souls who have Realised the Parameśvara by means of Devotion in the following terms:—

The incarnations of saints are for the public welfare  
they labour their own bodies for the benefit of others  
(Gā. 929).

And Bhartṛhari has said that, "svārtho yasya parārtha eva sa pumān ekaḥ satām agraṇīḥ", i.e., "that man with whom the interests of others have become identical with his own, is

really the highest of saints". Were not Manu and other law-makers, Jñānins? But, instead of exaggerating the worth of the illusion in the shape of the pain of Desire, and destroying all natural instincts, such as, of doing good to others etc., along with Desire, they have laid down the Śāstric bonds, such as the arrangement of the four castes etc., for the universal benefit (lokasaṁgraha ). The laws which prescribe learning for the Brahmins; warfare, for the Kṣatriyas; agriculture, protection of cattle, and business for the Vaiśyas and service for the Śūdras and which have been enjoined by the Śāstras consistently with the characteristic qualities of the different castes, have not been made for the benefit of every individual, It is stated in the Manu-Smṛti, that the division .

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of vocations among the four castes, has been made for universal benefit, bearing in mind the fact that in the interests of the protection of society, some persons must for a considerable length of time study warfare and be ready for war, and that others have got to meet the other needs of society by attending to agriculture, business, education, and other matters; and even the Gītā supports the same division (Manu, 1.87; Gī. 4.13; 18.41). I have stated above that if any of these four castes ceases to perform its duties, then to that extent, society will be incapacitated, and even runs the risk of being destroyed. Nevertheless, it is not that this vocational

division is uniform everywhere. The arrangements which have been suggested for the maintenance of society by the ancient Greek Philosopher Plato in his book on this subject, and by the modern French Philosopher Comte in his book called Natural Philosophy, though similar to the arrangement of the four wastes, are yet, to some extent, different from the arrangement of four castes mentioned in the Vedic religion, as will be seen by any one reading those books. Many questions have arisen on this point, such as, which arrangement of society is the best of these all; or, whether this goodness of arrangement is relative; and whether there can be a change in it by reference to change of times; and, the welfare of society (lokasaṁgraha) has become a very important science at the present day in Western countries. But, as my present object is only to elucidate the import of the Gītā, it is not necessary for me to consider those questions here. It cannot be doubted that at the time of the Gītā, the arrangement of the four castes was rigidly enforced, and that it had originally been given effect to for the welfare of society. Therefore, I have to mention here emphatically, that lokasaṁgraha according to the Gītā means, giving to other people a living example of how one can perform desirelessly all the various activities, which are allotted to one, according to the arrangement of the four castes. Scientists are not only the eyes, but also the preceptors of society. Therefore, in order to effect lokasaṁgraha as mentioned above, it becomes necessary for them to engage in

such activities, as will prevent the disruption of the self-maintaining and self-uplifting capacity of society, and will

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allow it to grow, after they have in the first place weeded out whatever they might find faulty in the prevalent social arrangements, having regard to the changed times and places, as was done by Śvetaketu. In order to effect universal welfare in this way, Janaka continued to rule till the end of his life instead of renouncing the world, and Manu consented to become the first king; and it is for this reason that there is frequent advice in the Gītā to Arjuna to engage in the warfare, which was the law for him in accordance with the arrangement of the four castes, by the use of such expressions as the following:- "svadharmam api cāvekṣya na vikampitum arhasi" (Gī. 2.31), i.e. "it is not proper that you should bemoan having to perform that duty which is your lot according to your caste"; or, "svabhāvanīyataṁ karma kurvan nāpnoti kilbiṣam" (Gī. 18.47), i.e., "by doing that duty which has been enjoined on you by the arrangement of the four castes, having regard to characteristic natures, you will not incur any sin". No one says that one should not, to the best of one's capacity, acquire the Knowledge of the Parameśvara. Nay, it is the doctrine also of the Gītā that it is the highest duty of every human being in this world to acquire this Knowledge. But, as the benefit of one's own Ātman also includes exerting oneself to the fullest extent

of one's abilities, for the benefit of the all-pervading Ātman, the Gītā goes further and says that the Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman ultimately resolves itself into bringing about lokasaṁgraha . Nevertheless, from the fact that -a particular person has acquired Knowledge of the Brahman, it does not follow that he, on that account, becomes capable of personally taking part in all the various vocations in the world. Both Bhīṣma and Vyāsa were great Jñānins, and great devotees of the Blessed Lord. But no one says that Vyāsa could have carried out the work of warfare as well as Bhīṣma; and even if one considers the gods, one does not find that the work of destroying the world has been entrusted to Viṣṇu instead of Śaṅkara. The state of being birth-released (jīvan-mukta) is the last stage of the mind 's freedom from objects of pleasure, and of an equable and pure Reason, and of Metaphysical excellence; it is not a test of excellence in Material vocations. Therefore, the Gītā, has again preached twice in the same chapter

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that the Jñānin must, after acquisition of Knowledge, continue to perform that business or duty for the universal welfare which is consistent with his. caste, and which he had been performing during the whole of his life consistently with the arrangement of the four castes, which has been based on inherent qualities, because, it is likely that he will be an adept"

in that business alone; and that if he takes to any other-business, there is a chance of harm being done to society (Gī. 3.35; 18.47). This diverse capacity, which exists within every person, consistently with the god-given inherent natural, characteristics, is known as 'adhikāra' (qualification or authority); and it has been stated in the Vedānta-Sūtras, that "yāvad adhikāram avasthitir ādhikāriṇām" (Ve. Sū. 3.3.32), i.e., "even if a man has acquired the knowledge of the Brahman, he must go on performing those duties, which are his lot according to his qualification (adhikāra), so long as he lives, for the welfare of society". Some say that this injunction of the Vedānta-Sūtras applies only to persons, who are really men of high authority; and if one considers the illustrations given in the commentaries on these Sūtras, in support of the Sutra, it is seen that they are of Vyāsa and other persons holding high: authority. But, the original Sutra makes no mention of the greatness or the smallness of authority. Therefore, the word 'adhikāra' must be taken to mean high or low qualification of every kind; and if one considers minutely and independently what this qualification is, and how it is acquired, it is seen that in as much as the Parameśvara created man simultaneously with society, and society simultaneously with man, every human being, as a result of the arrangement of four castes, or of any other social arrangement consistent with the division, of inherent qualities, acquires, by birth, the high or low qualification of maintaining and uplifting society, according to his or her own powers, and proportionately with whatever



intellectual capacity, authoritative capacity, financial capacity, or physical capacity is naturally possessed by him, or can be acquired by him having regard to his status in life. Just as extremely small wheels are necessary along with large wheels in order that any machine should work properly, so also is it necessary that the authority of common-place persons.

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should be exercised properly and fully in the same way as the authority of superior persons like Vyāsa and others, in order that the immense and ponderous activity or mechanism of the Cosmos should continue to work in a properly regulated manner. Because, if potters do not manufacture pots or weavers do not weave clothes, the maintenance of society (lokasaṁgraha) cannot be satisfactorily carried out, even if the king protects society properly; or, if the most insignificant pointsman or cabinman in a railway administration does not properly perform his duty, it will not be possible for the railway train to rush along with safety and with the speed of wind, both during the day and during the night, as it now does. Therefore, it follows from the above argument advanced, by the writer of the Vedānta-Sūtras, that even an ordinary person, and not only superior persons like Vyāsa and others – whether such ordinary person is a king or is a poor man – must not, after acquisition of Knowledge, fail to exercise the large or small authority of carrying out public welfare, which. " has

properly befallen him; but should, so long as life lasts, execute that authority desirelessly, and as a matter of duty, to the fullest extent of his powers and his intelligence, and as far as circumstances will permit. It is not proper for him . to say that if he does not do it, somebody else will; because, in that case, not only does one man fall short in the performance of the total work of society, and thereby society lose its aggregate power, but, as another person cannot do that particular work as well as a Jñānin, the general welfare of society suffers to that extent. Besides, as has been mentioned above, the mental frame of other people is also disturbed by the example of Abandonment of Action by a Jñānin. It is- true that the followers of the Saṁnyāsa school sometimes say that when one's own Ātman has obtained Release, by the Mind having been purified as a result of Karma, one should be satisfied with that; and without caring if the whole world goes to dogs, one should neither perform lokasaṁgraha, nor cause it to be performed – "lokasaṁgrahadharmam ca naiva kuryān na kārayet" (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. Anugītā. 46.39). But, it becomes quite clear from the justification which they advance about the life of Vyāsa and others, or from the advice

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given by Vaśiṣṭha or Pañcaśikha to Rāma or Janaka to go on performing their duties of maintaining and uplifting society according to their authority till death, that the doctrine of the Saṁnyāsa school is one-sided, and is not a scientific verity

which will stand firm at all times. Therefore, it must be said that one should not pay attention to this one-sided advice, and that the only path which is excellent and is consistent with the Śāstras is to continue Action beneficial to society, so long as life lasts, even after having acquired Realisation, and with due regard to one's own qualification, following the illustration of the Blessed Lord Himself. Nevertheless., this lokasaṁgraha must not be performed, entertaining any Hope for Fruit (phalāśā); because, if one entertains the Hope for Fruit, though it may be about lokasaṁgraha, one cannot but suffer unhappiness, if that hope is frustrated. Therefore, a man should not entertain the proud or desireful thought that 'I shall bring about lokasaṁgraha', and a man has to bring about lokasaṁgraha merely as a duty. It is for the same reason that the Gītā has used the rather longish phraseology of: "lokasaṁgraham evāpi saṁpaśyan", i.e., "you must perform Action, keeping in sight (saṁpaśyan) public welfare" (Gī. 3.20), instead of saying that 'lokasaṁgraha' means, "for obtaining fruit in the shape of public welfare". It is true that lokasaṁgraha is an important duty; hut it must not be forgotten that the advice given by the Blessed Lord to Arjuna in the previous verse (Gī. 3.19) that all acts should be performed being free from Attachment, applies equally to lokasaṁgraha .

If it is proved by logical argument that the opposition between Jñāna and Karma is an opposition between Jñāna and Desireful

Karma, that there is no opposition between Jñāna and Desireless Karma from the Metaphysical point of view, and that as Karma is unavoidable, and is also essential from the point of view of lokasaṁgraha , even a Jñānin must, so long as life lasts, continue to perform the duties of the four castes, according to his qualification, and without Attachment; and if the Gītā says the same thing, a doubt naturally arises as to what becomes of the Saṁnyāsa (ascetic) state, out of the four states of life, which have been described in the Smṛti texts of the

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Vedic religion. In the Manu-Smṛti and other Smṛtis, the four - states (āśrama), namely, celibacy, householdership, living in the woods, and asceticism have been mentioned; and it is there stated that after the Mind has been gradually purified by carrying out the duties of education (adhyayana), sacrificial ritual, charitable gifts etc. which befall a person according to the arrangement of the four castes, as prescribed by the Śāstras, in the first three states of life, a man should in the end literally give up all Action and renounce the world, and attain Release (See Manu. 6.1 and 33 – 37). From this it follows, that according to all the writers of the Smṛtis, though sacrificial ritual and charitable gifts etc. are proper to the state of a householder, yet, their only purpose is the purification of the Mind, that is to say, to bring one to the stage of Realising that

there is only one Ātman in all created beings, by the gradual elimination of one's Attachment to objects of pleasure, and of one's self-serving Reason, which (elimination) results in the gradual increase of the desire to do good to others; and that once this mental state has been acquired, one must in the end literally abandon all Action and take to the fourth state of Saṁnyāsa (Asceticism) in order to obtain Release. This is the Path of Saṁnyāsa which was established by Śrī Śaṁkarācārya in the present Kali-yuga, and Kālidāsa, who followed the teaching of the Smṛtis, has described the powerful kings of the Solar Dynasty (sūryavaṁśī), in the beginning of the .Raghuvamśa as follows:—

śaiśave 'bhyastavidyāmaṁ yauvane viṣayaiṣiṇām ।  
vārdhake munivṛttinām yogenānte tanutyajām ॥  
(Raghu. 1.8.)

that is, "they were such as performed abhyāsa (brahmacarya) as children, took up the worldly life entailing the enjoyment of the objects of pleasure in their youth (gr̥hasthāśrama), they lived in the woods during old age, or led the life of a muni and ultimately took their Ātman into the Brahman according to the rules of the Saṁnyāsa state, by practising the Pātañjala-

Yoga and gave up their lives. Similarly, it is stated in the Śukānupraśna in the Mahābhārata that:—

catuśpadi hi niḥśreṇi brahmaṇyeṣā pratiṣṭhitā ।  
etām āruhya niḥśreṇīm brahmaloke mahīyate ॥ (Śān.  
241. 15).

that is, "this ladder with four steps (in the shape of the four stages) ultimately leads to the state of the Brahman. When in this way, a man goes up this ladder from one state into the next higher state, he ultimately acquires greatness in the sphere of the Brahman". And after that, the following order has been described, namely:—

kaṣāyaṁ pācayitvāśu śrenisthāneṣu ca triṣu ।  
pravrajec ca paraṁ sthānaṁ parigrahaṁ anuttamam ॥  
(Śān. 344.3).

that is, "a man should, in the three steps of this ladder, destroy as early as possible his kilbiṣa, that is, his faults in the shape of selfish tendencies, or Attachment to objects of pleasure, and should then renounce the world; pārvirājya, that is, Saṁnyāsa is the most excellent state of all ". This same course of going from one state to another state of life has also been mentioned in the Manu-Smṛiti (Manu. 6.4). But Manu had fully realised the fact that if in this way there was an inordinate increase in the desire of people to take up the fourth state, the activity in the world would be destroyed, and society would ultimately be lamed. Therefore, after having definitely

enjoined the performance of all activities which are necessary to be performed in the previous states of a householder, and which consisted of acts of valour or of universal welfare, Manu has laid down the clear limit in the- following words, namely:–

gṛhasthastu yadā paśyed valīpalitam ātmanāḥ ।  
apatyasyaiva cāpatyaṁ tad āraṇyaṁ samāśrayet ॥  
(Manu. 6.2).

that is, "when his body has become covered with wrinkles, and he has seen his own grand-children, the householder should

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become a denizen of the woods, and should take Saṁnyāsa". The Manu-Smṛti gives the following reason why this limit has to be followed, namely: in coming to birth, every man brings on his back the three debts (duties) to the Ṛṣis, to his ancestors, and to the deities. Therefore, until a man has discharged all these three obligations, that is, to the Ṛṣis, by the study of Vedas; to the ancestors, by the procreation of offspring; and to the deities, by the performance of sacrificial ritual, he is not in a position to give up worldly life and take Saṁnyāsa; and if he does so, he will go to perdition as a result of his not having discharged the indebtedness which he has acquired as a result of his birth. (See, Manu. 6. 35 – 37; and the canon (mantra) from the Tai. Sam. quoted in the last

chapter). According to ancient Hindu Law, a man 's children, and even his grand-children, had to discharge the debts of their ancestors, without pleading the law of limitation; and they used to consider it a great misfortune to have to die without having discharged the debts due to others. When this fact is brought to mind, my readers will clearly understand what the intention of our law-givers was, in referring to the above-mentioned important social duties, as 'debts'. Kālidāsa has said in the Raghuvamśa that all the kings belonging to the Solar Dynasty (sūryavamśī) led their lives according to the rules laid down by the Smṛtis, and that they used to leave the state of the householder after (not before) installing their sons on the throne, after the sons had grown up and become capable of ruling (Raghu. 7.68). And there is statement in the Bhāgavata (Bhāg. 6. 5. 35 – 42), that because Nārada advised the sons of Dakṣa Prajapati named Haryaśva and also again his several other sons named Śabalāśva to take to the Path of Saṁnyāsa before they had married, and made Saṁnyāsins of them, Dakṣa-Prajapati reprimanded Nārada for this his unlawful and objectionable behaviour, and laid a curse on him. From this, the original idea of this arrangement of the four states appears to have been, that when a man has lived his worldly life according to the injunctions of the Śāstras, and his children have become more capable than him, he should not interfere with their enthusiasm yielding to the interfering tendency of old age; but should become imbued solely with the idea of



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acquiring Release; and should of his own accord and voluntarily give up worldly life. The same idea is conveyed in the advice given by Vidura to Dhṛtarāṣṭra in the Viduranīti in the following words:—

utpādya putrān anṛṇāmrāśca kṛtvā vṛttim ca tebhyo  
'nuvidhāya kimcit |  
sthāne kumārīḥ pratipādya sarvā araṇyasaṁstho 'tha  
munir bubhūṣet || (Ma. Bhā. U. 36. 39)

that is, "after a man has begotten sons in the state of a householder, and left no debts to be discharged by them, and made some arrangements for their maintenance, and after having got all - his daughters properly married, he should become a denizen of the woods and satisfy his desire of renouncing the world"; and the idea of ordinary people about worldly life in this country is more or less consistent with the dictates of Vidura. Nevertheless, as it was believed that giving up worldly life and taking to Saṁnyāsa was the highest ideal of manhood, the beneficial direction of the three previous stages of life laid down by the writers of the Smṛtis for the successful carrying out of the ordinary affairs of the world, gradually lost importance; and people came to the stage of saying, that if a man had at birth, or in comparatively young age, acquired. Knowledge, it was not wrong for him to renounce the world at

once without waiting to go through the other three stages – "brahmacaryād eva pravrajat gṛhād vā vanād vā" (Jābā. 4). For the same reason, Kapila has given the following advice to Syūmaraśmi in the Gokāpīlīya catechism in the Mahābhārata, namely:–

śarīrapaktiḥ karmāṇi jñānaṁ tu paramā gatiḥ ।

kaṣāye karmabhiḥ pakve rasajñāne ca tiṣṭhati ॥ [1]  
(Śān. 269 38)

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that is, "the object of Karma is to eliminate the disease in the body in the shape of Attachment to objects of pleasure, and Jñāna is the highest and the ultimate goal; when the disease in the shape of ignorance, or the kaṣāya , in the body is eliminated, as the result of Karma, desire for the Knowledge of the essence (rasa) is created". In the same way, it is stated in the chapter on Release (mokṣa) in the Piṅgalagītā, that "nairāśyaṁ paramaṁ sukham", i.e., despair is the highest

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[1] This verse has been adopted in the Śāṁkarabhāṣya on the Vedānta-Sūtras, and there it runs as follows:–

kaṣāyapaktiḥ karmāṇi jñānaṁ tu paramā gatiḥ ।

kaṣāye karmabhiḥ pakve tato jñānaṁ pravartate ॥ (Ve. 85. Sam. Bhā. 3. 4. 26).

I have quoted the verse here as I found it in the Mahābhārata.

happiness" or, "yo 'sau prāṇāntiko rogas tām tṛṣṇām tyajataḥ sukham", i.e., "until the fatal disease, in the shape of Desire, has left the body, there can be no happiness" (Śān. 174. 65 and 58). And in addition to the statements in the Jābāla and Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣads, there are also statements in the Kaivalya and Nārāyaṇopaniṣads that "na karmaṇā na prajayā dhanena tyāgenaika amṛtatvam ānaśuḥ", i.e., "not by Karma, nor by progeny, or money, but by tyāga (Renunciation), is Release attained by some" (Kai. 1.2; Nārā. U. 12.3.3 and 78). If the doctrine of the Gītā is that even a Jñānin must go on performing Action till the end, I must explain how these statements have to be disposed of. The same doubt arose in the mind of Arjuna, and he has in the beginning of the eighteenth chapter asked the Blessed Lord:— "then, explain to me what Renunciation (saṁnyāsa) and Abandonment (tyāga) respectively are". But before considering the reply given by the Blessed Lord to this question, it is necessary to consider here shortly another equally important Vedic Path of Action, which has been mentioned in the Smṛti texts in addition to this Path of Renunciation.

This path of four steps, namely, celibacy, householdership, living in the woods, and asceticism is known as the 'Smārta' path, that is, 'the path prescribed by the writers of the Smṛtis'. This arrangement of the four states has been made by the writers of the Smṛtis, consistently with the growth in a man's age, in order to mutually harmonise the contradictory

statements in the Vedas, which enjoin the Performance of Action, as also the Abandonment of Action; and if the literal Abandonment of Action is considered the highest ideal, it would not be incorrect to consider the path of four steps laid down by the writers of the Smṛtis for leading one's life, as the means

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or the preliminary preparation for reaching that ideal. It is true that if one accepts these rising steps of leading one's life, the activity of the world will not come to an end, and the Karma laid down by the Vedas, can be harmonised with the Knowledge expounded in the Upaniṣads. Yet, in as much as the state of the householder is the state which provides the other three states with food (Manu. 6.89), the importance of the state of a householder has ultimately been frankly acknowledged in the Manu-Smṛti, and even in the Mahābhārata in the following stanza:—

yathā mātaram āśritya sarve jīvanti jantavaḥ ।  
evam garhasthyam āśritya vartanta itarāśramāḥ ॥  
(Śān. 268.6)

that is, "as all living beings (jantavaḥ) live by the support of the mother (earth), so also do the other three states live on the support of the state of a householder" (See Śān. 268.6; and

Manu. 3.77). And Manu has referred to the other three states of life as rivers, and to the state of the householder as the sea (Manu. 6. 90; Ma. Bhā. Śān. 295.39). If the importance of the state of a householder is thus unquestionable, where is the sense of the advice that one must sometime give up the state of the householder, and make a Renunciation of Action (karma-saṁnyāsa)? Is it impossible to perform the duties of the state of a householder even after the acquisition of Knowledge? No; then, where is the sense of saying that a Jñānin should go out of worldly life? The perfect Jñānins who lead their lives desirelessly, are certainly more capable and fit for performing universal welfare, than ordinary people who entertain some selfishness or other in their hearts. Therefore, if a Jñānin is given permission to leave worldly life, just when his capacity has become perfect as a result of Knowledge, that society, for the benefit of which the arrangement of the four castes has been made, will suffer serious loss. The case would be different if some persons left society and went to live in the forest for want of physical strength; and that must have been the idea of Manu in relegating Renunciation (saṁnyāsa) to old age. But, as has been stated

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above, this beneficial limit was not observed. Therefore, although the writers of the Smṛtis had created the rising ladder of the four states, in order to harmonise the two-fold order of

the Vedas, viz., to perform Action, and to give up Action, the Blessed Lord, who was undoubtedly as competent, or even more competent than the writers of the Smṛtis, to harmonise these dictates of the Vedas, has Himself revived, and fully supported, in the form of the Bhāgavata religion, the Path which combines Karma with Jñāna, and which was followed by Janaka and others in ancient times. The difference between the two is, that in the Bhāgavata doctrine, reliance is not placed only on Metaphysical ideas, but the additional easy remedy of Devotion to Vāsudeva has been added. But, a detailed discussion of this matter will be made later on in the thirteenth chapter. Although the Bhāgavata religion is Devotional, yet, as it has adopted the important principle enunciated in the Path prescribed by Janaka, namely, that after the acquisition of the Knowledge of the Parameśvara, a Jñānin should not take to Saṁnyāsa in the shape of Abandonment of Action, but should go on desirelessly performing all his activities till death for universal welfare, giving up the Hope for Fruit of Action (phalāśā), both paths are identical from the point of view of Karma, that is to say, they both embody the union of Jñāna with Karma, or are Activistic. As the first protagonists of this Activistic religion were the two Ṛṣis, Nara and Narayana, who were living incarnations of the Parabrahman, the ancient name of this religion is the 'Nārāyaṇīya Religion'. Though, both these Ṛṣis had acquired the highest Knowledge, they advised people to perform Action desirelessly, and did so themselves (Ma. Bhā. U. 48.21); and

therefore, this religion has been described in the Mahābhārata by saying: "pravṛttilakṣaṇaś caiva dharmo nārāyaṇātmakeḥ" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 347.81), or, "pravṛttilakṣaṇam dharmam ṛṣir nārāyaṇo 'bravīt" – the religion propounded by the Ṛṣi Nārāyaṇa was life-long Activistic (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 217.2). This religion is the Sātvata or Bhāgavata religion, and it has been clearly stated in the Bhāgavata, that the form of this Sātvata or original Bhāgavata religion was 'naiṣkarmya-lakṣaṇa', that is, desirelessly Activistic (See Bhāg. 1.3.8 and 11.4.6). This Activistic

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path was also known as 'Yoga', as is clear from the line, "pravṛttilakṣaṇo yogaḥ jñānam samnyāsalakṣaṇam" in the; Anugītā [Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 43. 25]; and, that is why the religion propounded in the Gītā by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who was the incarnation, of Narayana, to Arjuna, who was the incarnation of Kara, has-been called 'Yoga' in the Gītā itself. Some persons now-a-days believe that the Bhāgavata and the Smārta paths originally came into existence as a result of a difference between the objects of worship; but according to me, this belief is wrong; because, although the objects of worship in these two paths may be different, yet the Metaphysical Knowledge contained in both is the same; and when the Metaphysical foundation of both was the same, it is not likely that these ancient Jñānins, who were steeped in this Supreme Knowledge, would have

kept up differences between themselves, merely on account of a difference in the objects of worship. For this reason, it is stated both in the Bhagavadgītā (9.14) and in the Śivagītā (12.4) that, whatever is worshipped, the worship ultimately reaches one and the same Parameśvara; and these two deities have been described in the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine in the Mahābhārata as being identical, by saying that Nārāyaṇa is the same as Rudra, that the worshippers of Nārāyaṇa were the worshippers of Rudra, and the enemies of Nārāyaṇa, the enemies of Rudra (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 341.20 – 26 and 342.129). I do not say that the difference between Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism did not exist in ancient times. What I mean to say is that the original reason for the difference between the Smārta and Bhāgavata paths, was not the difference in the objects of worship, namely, Śiva and Viṣṇu; and that these two paths must have first come into existence as a result of a difference of opinion on an important point, namely, whether Asceticism or Activism should be followed after the acquisition of Knowledge. After a considerable lapse of time, when this Activistic path or Karma-Yoga of the original Bhāgavata religion ceased to exist, and it got its present form of the pure worship of Viṣṇu, that is to say, a more or less Non-Activistic form, and on that account, people began to fight with each other merely on the ground that the deity of one was Śiva, whereas the deity of the other was Viṣṇu, the words 'Smārta'



and 'Bhāgavata' became respectively synonymous with 'Śaiva' and 'Vaiṣṇava'; and ultimately the Vedānta of these present-day followers of the Bhāgavata religion (Dualism or Qualified Monism), and their astrology, that is to say, the observance of the eleventh day of the month, as also the way of applying the sandal-wood paste on the forehead, became different from the Smārta way. But, it becomes quite clear- from the word 'Smārta' that these differences were not real, that is, original. As the Bhāgavata religion was promulgated' by the Blessed Lord Himself, there is no wonder that the object of worship in it should be the Blessed Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu. But, as the root-meaning of the word ' Smārta ' is ' prescribed by the Smṛtis ', the deity worshipped according to the Smārta path- need not be Śiva; because, it is nowhere stated in the works of Manu or other ancient Smṛti texts, that Śiva is the only deity which should be worshipped. On the other hand, Viṣṇu has been mentioned more often, and in some places Ganapati and other deities are also mentioned. Besides, as both the deities Śiva and Viṣṇu are Vedic, that is, as both have been, mentioned in the Vedas, it is not proper to refer to only one of them as 'Smārta'. Besides, Śrī Śaṅkarācārya is looked- upon as a protagonist of the Smārta religion; yet, Śāradā (goddess of learning ~Translator.) is the deity worshipped in the Śāṅkara monasteries; and wherever there has been occasion- in the Śāṅkarabhāṣya to refer to the worship of an idol, the Ācārya has referred, not to the Śiva-liṅga, but to the Śāligrāma that is,

the image of Śrī Viṣṇu (Ve. Sū. Śām. Bhā. 1.2.7; 1.3.14 and 4.1.3; Chān. Śām. Bhā. 8. 1. 1). There is also a tradition that the worship of the Pañcayatana (group of five deities) was first started by Śaṁkarācārya. Therefore, it follows that according to the original meaning of these words, people disregarded whether a person worshipped Śiva or Viṣṇu , and considered those as SMĀRTA, whose ultimate ideal; was to first go through worldly life in youth as prescribed by the Śāstras, and consistently with the arrangement of the four states laid down systematically and in detail in the Smṛti texts, and to take Saṁnyāsa, or the fourth state, by giving up Action altogether in old age; and considered those as BHĀGAVATA, who believed that all the

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Actions appropriate to the state of a householder should be performed desirelessly till death, according to the advice of the Blessed Lord, simultaneously with the acquisition of Knowledge and with the possession of a passionate devotion to the Blessed Lord; and in these meanings, these two words are respectively synonymous with Sāṁkhya and Yoga or Saṁnyāsa and Karma-Yoga. Saṁnyāsa subsequently ceased to exist as a state of life, whether as a result of the incarnations taken by the Blessed Lord, or because the importance of the state of a householder, which included Spiritual Knowledge, began to be realised; and it has been included among the Kali-

varjya, that is, those things which are prohibited in the Kali-yuga according to the Śāstras [1] But, later on the protagonists of the Buddhist and the Jain religions accepted the opinions of the Kapila-Sāṃkhya school, and brought into prominence the - doctrine that Release is impossible unless a man takes Saṁnyāsa, and gives up worldly life. It is well-known in history that Buddha himself gave up his kingdom and his wife and children and entered the Saṁnyāsa state in youth. Although Śrī Śaṅkarācārya refuted the Jain and Buddhistic doctrines, yet the path of Asceticism, which was principally put into vogue by the Jains and Buddhists, was allowed to remain by the Ācārya as being the Saṁnyāsa prescribed by the Śrutis and the Smṛtis; and he has, therefore, interpreted the Gītā as supporting the Saṁnyāsa path. But, really speaking the Gītā is not a work which supports the Smārta path; and although the earlier portions of it refer to the Sāṃkhya or the Saṁnyāsa path, the later portions, which contain the conclusion, support the Activistic or Bhāgavata religion, as

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- [1] See the chapter of Kali-varjya in the third part (pariccheda) of the Nirṇaya-Sindhu. Here, the Smṛti texts, "agnihotraṁ gavāḽambhaṁ saṁnyāsaṁ palapaitṛkaṁ | devarāc ca sutotpattiḥ kalau pañca vivarjayet || ", and "saṁnyāsaś ca na kartavyo brāhmaṇena vijānatā" etc., are mentioned. The first of these two tests means that agnihotra, (perpetual sacred fire), slaughter of cows, Saṁnyāsa, partaking of meat at the time of the performance of the śrāddha (ancestor-worship), and niyoga (procreating off-spring from the wife of another ~Translator.), these five are prohibited in the Kaliyuga. The prohibition against Saṁnyāsa, out of these, was removed by Śaṅkarācārya.

has been mentioned by me already in the first chapter to have been stated by the author of the Mahābhārata itself. As both' these paths are Vedic, it is possible to harmonise them with, each other to a considerable extent, if not wholly. But harmonising them in this way, is one thing, and saying that, the Gītā supports only the Path of Renunciation, and that the references in it to the Path of Energism as being productive of Release, are merely praise, is quite a different thing. As. a result of difference in taste, one man may prefer the Smārta religion to the Bhāgavata religion; or he may consider as more convincing the reasons which are commonly given in support of the Abandonment of Action. I will not deny that possibility. For instance, no one has any doubt that Śrī Śaṅkarācārya favoured the Smārta or Saṁnyāsa path, and looked upon all other paths as based on ignorance. But, on that account, one cannot conclude that that was the- purport of the Gītā. If you do not accept the doctrines laid, down by the Gītā, do not follow them. But, it is not proper on that account to interpret the statement, "there are, in this world, two independent Niṣṭhās or paths leading to Release for living one's life," made in the commencement of the Gītā, as meaning that: "the Saṁnyāsa path is the only true and superior path". These two paths, which have been described in the Gītā, have been current in the Vedic religion, independently of each other,

even from before the days of Janaka and Yājñavalkya; and we see that persons like Janaka, on whom the duty of the maintenance and uplift of society had befallen, as a result of their status as Kṣatriyas, or hereditarily, or as a result of their own prowess, continued their activities desirelessly, even after the acquisition of Knowledge; and were spending their lives in bringing about the benefit of the world. Bearing in mind this status of certain persons in society, the Mahābhārata contains two distinct statements, according to difference in status, as, "sukhaṁ jīvanti munayo bhaiṣyavṛttim samāśritāḥ", i.e., "ascetics living in the woods, joyfully accept the status of beggars" (Śān. 178. 11), and "daṇḍa eva hi rājendra kṣairadharṇa na muṇḍanam", i.e., "it is the duty of the Kṣatriyas to maintain and uplift people by punishment, and not to shave off the hair on their heads" (Śān. 23.46). But,

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from this, one must not conclude that Karma-Yoga was the proper duty only for the Kṣatriyas, who were responsible for the maintenance of society. The true meaning of the above statement from the science of Karma-Yoga is, that every man must, after the acquisition of Knowledge, go on performing - those duties, which are his according to his qualification (adhikāra); and it is on this account, that it is stated in the Bhārata that, "eṣā pūrvatarā vṛttir brāhmaṇasya vidhīyate" (Śān. 237), i.e., "even the Brahmins used, in ancient times, to

continue Yajñas and Yāgas, according to their qualification, after the acquisition of Knowledge"; and in the Manu-Smṛti, the Vedic Karma-Yoga has been considered more proper for all classes "than the Saṁnyāsa path (Manu. 6. 86 – 96). It is also nowhere stated that the Bhāgavata religion exists only for the Kṣatriyas; but on the other hand, it has been praised by saying that it is accessible even to women, Śūdras etc. (Gī. 9.32); and there are also definite stories in the Mahābhārata that this religion was followed by the Tulādhāra, or a merchant, and Vyādha, or a hunter, and that these taught it to the Brahmins (Śān. 261; Vana. 215); and the illustrations, which are given in the books on the Bhāgavata religion, of prominent persons who followed the Desireless Karma-Yoga are not only of Kṣatriyas like Janaka and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but also of learned Brahmins like Vaśiṣṭha, Jaigīṣavya, Vyāsa and others.

Although the Gītā supports only the Energistic Path, it must not be forgotten that it does not look upon the path of performing Action without Knowledge as leading to Release. There are also two paths of performing Knowledge-less Actions. The one is of performing Actions hypocritically '(with dambha), or with an ungodly (āsurī) frame of mind; and the other, is of performing them with religious faith (śraddhā). Out of these, the path of hypocrisy, or the āsurī path, was considered objectionable and productive of perdition, not only by the Gītā, but also by the writers of the Mīmāṃsā; and even in the Ṛg-Veda, religious faith has been extolled in many places

(Ṛg. 10. 151; 9. 113. 2 and 2. 12. 5). But, the Mīmāṃsā school says, with regard to those who perform Karma without Knowledge, but putting faith in the Śāstras, that if a man performs ritual throughout life merely with religious faith,

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and relying on the Śāstras, he will ultimately attain Release, though he may not have had a true Realisation of the form of the Parameśvara. I have stated in the last chapter that this path of the Mīmāṃsā school has been current from very ancient times in the shape of the Karma-kāṇḍa. Jaiminī says that it is nowhere stated either in the Veda-Samhitas or in the Brahmanas that the Path of Saṁnyāsa was essential; and that, on the other hand, there are clear statements in the Vedas, that Release is attained by remaining in the state of a householder (Ve. Sū. 3.4.17 – 20); and this statement of his is not without foundation. Because, this ancient path of the Karma-kāṇḍa came to be first looked upon as inferior only in the Upaniṣads. Although the Upaniṣads are Vedic, yet, they are later in point of time than the Saṁhitās and the Brahmanas, as is clear from the method of dealing with the subject-matter adopted in them. It is not that people had not acquired the Knowledge of the Parameśvara before that date. But the opinion that a man should apathetically abandon action, after the acquisition of Knowledge, in order to attain Release, first began to be acted upon only at the time of the Upaniṣads; and

thereafter, the Karma-kāṇḍa described in the Samhitas and in the Brahmanas came to be looked upon as inferior. Before that date, Karma was considered superior. When the Path of Saṁnyāsa, that is, of Knowledge coupled with apathy towards the world, thus became preponderant in the time of the Upaniṣads, Jñānins naturally began to neglect ritualistic sacrifices, as also the religious injunctions prescribed for the four castes; and the idea that universal welfare (lokasaṁgraha) was a duty, began to lose ground. It is true that the writers of the Smṛtis have stated in their works, that the sacrificial Karma enjoined in the Śrutis, and the duties proper for the four castes enjoined in the Smṛtis must be performed during the state of a householder; and they have in that way praised that state. But, as even according to the writers of the Smṛtis, indifference towards the world, or the state of Asceticism, was excellent, it was not possible that the inferiority placed on the Karma-kāṇḍa by the Upaniṣads, should be reduced by the arrangement of the four stages of life enjoined in the Smṛtis. In this state of

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things the Gītā has come forward to harmonise the Jñāna-kāṇḍa with the Karma-kāṇḍa, without deprecating either, by tacking on both of them to Devotion. The Gītā accepts the doctrines of the writers of the Upaniṣads that there is no Release without Jñāna, and that by sacrificial ritualistic Karma,



one can at most attain heaven (Muṇḍa. 1.2.10; Gī. 2.41 – 45). But, it is also a doctrine of the Gītā, that in order that the affairs of the world should go on, the wheel of Yajnas, or of Karma, must be kept going on; and that it is foolish to give up Karma at any time; and therefore, the Gītā advises that instead of performing the sacrificial ritual and other acts prescribed by the Śrutis, or the worldly activity enjoined by the arrangement of the four castes, merely with religious faith and ignorantly, one should perform them with a frame of mind which combines Spiritual Knowledge with indifference towards the world and merely as- a duty, so that the Karma which is performed will not obstruct Release, and at the same time, the circle of the Yajnas will- not be disrupted. It need not be said that this skill of the Gītā of harmonising the Jñāna-kāṇḍa with the Karma-kāṇḍa (that is, Saṁnyāsa and Karma) is better than what the writers of the Smṛtis have done; because, by the path prescribed in the Gītā, the benefit of the collective Ātman, which pervades the creation is achieved without at the same time in any way prejudicing the benefit of the individual Ātman. The Mīmāṃsā school says that as Karma is eternal, and is enjoined by the Vedas, one must perform it although one may not have acquired Knowledge; many (but not all) writers of the Upaniṣads treat Karma as inferior, and say that it must be given up by cultivating indifference towards the world; or, at any rate, one may safely say, that they are inclined to do so; and the writers of the Smṛtis harmonise these two opinions by differentiating between youth and old age, and relying on the

arrangement of the four states, and by saying that Actions should be performed in the three previous states of life, and that after the Mind has been purified by the performance of Actions, one should in old age give up Action and renounce the world. But the path prescribed by the Gītā is different from all these three paths. Though there is an opposition

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between Jñāna and Desire-prompted Action, there is no opposition between Jñāna and Desireless Action; therefore, the Gītā asks you to perform all Actions desirelessly, and never to give them up. If these four doctrines are compared with each other, it will be seen that all accept the position that Karma is necessary before Knowledge is acquired. But, the Upaniṣads and the Gītā say that Actions performed in that state and merely with religious faith do not yield any fruit except heaven. As to whether Karma should or should not be performed after this, that is, after the acquisition of Knowledge, there is a difference of opinion even among the writers of the Upaniṣads. Some of the Upaniṣads say, that the man who has become fit for Release after all desire has been destroyed in his heart as a result of Knowledge, need not perform Desire-prompted Actions, which lead only to heaven; and, other Upaniṣads, such as, Īśāvāsyā etc., insist that all these Actions must nevertheless be kept going on in order that the activities of the world should go on. It is quite clear that

the Gītā accepts the second one out of these two paths prescribed by the Upaniṣads (Gī. 5.2). But, though it may be said that the Jñānin, who has become fit for Release, should go on desirelessly performing all Actions for universal welfare, a doubt naturally arises here as to why he should perform such Karma like sacrificial ritual, which leads only to heaven. Therefore, this doubt has been raised in the beginning of the eighteenth chapter, and the Blessed Lord has given His clear decision, that in as much as, "sacrificial ritual, charity, austerity" etc., always have the effect of purifying the Mind, and of making the Mind more and more desireless, "these actions also" (etāny api) should be performed by the Jñānin desirelessly, continually, and without Attachment, for social welfare (Gī, 18.6). When all acts are desirelessly performed in this way, that is, with the intention of dedicating them to the Parameśvara, that amounts to the performance of a stupendous Yajna in the wide sense of the term; and then, the Karma performed for the sake of this Yajna does not become a source of bondage (Gī. 4.23). Not only that; but as all these Actions have been performed desirelessly, they do not produce the bondage-creating result in the shape of the attainment of

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heaven, which springs from sacrificial ritual, and do not stand in the way of Release. In short, although the Karma- kāṇḍa of

the Mīmāṃsā school has been kept intact in the Gītā, yet, it has been kept intact in such a way, that it definitely leads to Release instead of making a person journey to and from heaven, since all Actions have to be performed desirelessly. It must be borne in mind that this is the important difference between the Karma-mārga prescribed by the Mīmāṃsā school and the Karma-Yoga prescribed by the Gītā; and that both are not the same.

I have, thus, explained that the Bhagavadgītā has advocated the Activistic Bhāgavata religion or the Karma-Yoga, as also what the difference is, between this Karma-Yoga and the Karma-kāṇḍa of the Mīmāṃsā school. I shall now consider the difference in principles between the Karma-Yoga of the Gītā and the arrangement of the four states made by the writers of the Smṛtis on the authority of the Jñāna-kāṇḍa. This difference is very subtle; and strictly speaking, there is no need to enter into a fruitless discussion about this matter. Both accept the position that everyone must perform the duties proper to the first two states of life for the purification of the Mind. The only point of difference is whether after the acquisition of Knowledge, one should continue performing Action or renounce the world. Here, some are likely to think "that as such Jñānin are necessarily few and far between, it is not necessary to trouble much about whether these few persons - perform or do not perform Action. But this position is not correct; because, as the conduct of the Jñānin is considered

exemplary by other people, and also as every man directs his "behaviour from the very beginning according to what his ultimate end is, the question 'what the Jñānin should do' is a very important question from the general point of view. It is true that the Smṛti texts- say that a Jñānin should finally renounce the world. But, as has been stated above, there are exceptions even to this rule according to the directions of the Smṛtis. For instance, in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad, Yājñavalkya has given a considerable amount of advice about the Knowledge of the Brahman to Janaka; 1 but, he has nowhere said to Janaka: "you now give up ruling and renounce the

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world". It is stated there, on the contrary, that those Jñānins who give up worldly life after the acquisition of Knowledge, do so because they do not like (na kāmāyante) worldly life (Bṛ. 4.4.22). From this, the opinion of the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad seems clearly to be that taking or not taking Saṁnyāsa, after the acquisition of Knowledge, is a matter purely within the discretion of everybody; and that there is no permanent relationship between the Knowledge of the Brahman and Saṁnyāsa; and this statement in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad has been explained in the same way in the Vedānta-Sūtras (Ve. Sū. 3.4.15). Śaṁkarācārya has definitely laid down that it is not possible to attain Release unless Action is abandoned after the acquisition of Knowledge; and he has attempted to show in his

Bhāṣya that all the Upaniṣads are in favour of that proposition. Nevertheless, even Śrī Śaṅkarācārya has admitted that there is no objection to one's performing Actions till death, according to one's own qualification in life, even after the acquisition of Knowledge, as was done by Janaka and others. (See Ve. Sū. Śām. Bhā. 3.3.32; and Gī. Śām. Bhā. 2.11 and 3.20). From this it is clear that even the school of Saṁnyāsa or the Smṛtis do not look upon the performance of Action, after the acquisition of Knowledge, as objectionable; and that this school of thought allows some Jñānins to perform Actions according to their own qualifications, though as exceptions. The Gītā widens the scope of this exception and says that every Jñānin must go on performing the duties enjoined on the four castes, even after the acquisition of Knowledge, as a matter of duty, and for universal welfare. It, therefore, follows that though the religion of the Gītā is more comprehensive, the principle established by it is faultless, even from the point of view of the Saṁnyāsa school; and if one reads the Vedānta-Sūtras independently, he will notice that even in them, the Karma-Yoga combined with Knowledge has been considered acceptable as being a kind of Saṁnyāsa. (Ve. Sū. 3.4.26; 3.4.32 – 35). [1] Nevertheless, it is necessary to show

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[1] This portion of the Vedānta-Sūtras has been interpreted in a slightly different way in the Śaṅkarabhāṣya, But, according to me, the words "vihitattvāc cāśramakarmāṇi" (3.4.32) mean: "there is no objection to the Jñānin doing the various acts prescribed for the various states, because they are proper (vihita)". In short, according to me, the Vedānta-Sūtras have accepted both the positions of the Jñānin

what becomes of the fourth state or Saṁnyāsa in the shape of Abandonment of Action, which has been prescribed in the Smṛti texts, if Karma has to be performed lifelong, though desirelessly. Arjuna was thinking that the Blessed Lord would sometime or other say to him that it was not possible to attain Release unless sometime or other Saṁnyāsa in the shape of Abandonment of Action was taken; and that, he would then get a chance of giving up fighting on the authority of something the Blessed Lord had Himself said. But, when Arjuna saw that the Blessed Lord did not even touch the question of Saṁnyāsa by Abandonment of Action till the end of the seventeenth chapter, and that He over and over again advised the Abandonment of the Fruit of Action, he, in the commencement of the eighteenth chapter, has at last said to the Blessed Lord: " then, tell me the difference between Saṁnyāsa (Renunciation) and Tyāga (Abandonment) ". In replying to- this question of Arjuna, the Blessed Lord says: "O Arjuna, if you think that the path of Karma-Yoga which I have described so far, does not include Saṁnyāsa, you are wrong. Karma-Yogins divide all Actions into 'kāmya', that is, Actions performed with an Attached frame of mind, and 'niṣkāma', that is, Actions performed without Attachment. (These two are

referred to as 'pravṛtta' and 'nivṛtta' Action respectively in the Manu-Smṛti 12. 89). Out of these, the Karma-Yogin totally gives up all Actions which fall into the category of Desireful Actions, that is to say, he makes a 'Saṁnyāsa' (Renunciation) of them. That leaves the niṣkāma (Desireless) or the nivṛtta Actions. It is true that the Karma-Yogin performs these Desireless (niṣkāma) Actions; but in performing them he has made a 'Tyāga' (Abandonment) of the Hope for Fruit. In short, how does one escape Saṁnyāsa or Tyāga, even in the Path of Karma-Yoga? "Whereas the followers of the Smṛtis literally renounce Karma, the Yogins in the Path of Karma-Yoga renounce instead, the Hope for the Fruit of

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Action. But, in either case, Saṁnyāsa is a common factor" (See my commentary on Gī. 18. -6). Nay, that man who has started performing all Actions desirelessly and with the idea of dedicating them to the Parameśvara, must be said to be an 'eternal ascetic' ('nitya-saṁnyāsin'), though he may be a householder (Gī. 5.3). This is the principal doctrine of the Bhāgavata religion; and it is this doctrine which has been preached by Nārada to Yudhiṣṭhira in the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa after he had first explained to him the duties of the "four states of life. As has been stated by Vāman Pandit in his commentary on the Gītā, that is, in the Yathārtha Dīpikā (18.2), it is not that there is no Saṁnyāsa unless a man "shaves off his



hair, and throws away the sacred thread"; or, takes a staff in his hand and goes about begging; or, gives up all Action and goes and lives in the forest. Renunciation (saṁnyāsa) and indifference towards the world (vairagya) are properties of the Mind; they are not the properties of the staff, or of the hair on the head, or of the sacred thread. If one says that they are the properties of the staff etc. and not of the Mind or of Knowledge, then even the man who holds the handle of the royal umbrella or of any umbrella, must get the same Release as is obtained by a Saṁnyāsa. It is stated in the conversation between Janaka and Sulabhā, that:—

tridaṇḍādiṣu yady asti mokṣo jñānena kasyacit |  
chātradiṣu katham na syāt tulyahetau parigrahe ||  
(Śān. 320.42).

Because, in either case taking the staff in the hand is a common factor. In short, the control of the body, of the speech, and of the mind is the true 'tridaṇḍa ', (three-fold staff), (Manu. 12.10); and the true Saṁnyāsa is the Renunciation of the Desire prompted frame of Mind (Gī. 18.2); and as one cannot escape that Saṁnyāsa in the Bhāgavata religion (Gī. 6.2), so also can one not escape the Action of keeping the mind steady or of eating etc. in Sāṁkhya philosophy. Then, where is the sense of making childish objections that the Path of Karma-Yoga does not include Saṁnyāsa in the shape of Abandonment of Action, and is,

therefore, contrary to the injunctions of the Smṛtis or unacceptable; and fighting about white clothes or

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saffron-coloured robes? The Blessed Lord has candidly and without bias said that:

ekaṁ sām̐khyam ca yogaṁ ca yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati ||  
(Gī. 5. 5.)

that is, " that man is truly wise who has realised that Sām̐khya and (Karma-) Yoga are not two from the point of view of Release, but are one and the same"; and it is stated even in the Bhārata that, "sām̐khyayogena tulyo hi dharma ekānta-sevitaḥ" (Śān. 348.74), that is, " the Ekāntika or Bhāgavata religion is equal in merit to the Sām̐khya religion". In short, in as much as true indifference to the world (vairagya) or 'eternal renunciation' (nitya-saṁnyāsi), (5.3), consists in merging all selfish interests in universal interests, and in desirelessly performing all duties which befall one in worldly life according to one's own qualifications, so long as life lasts, for the welfare of all created beings, and purely as duties, those who follow the Path of Karma- Yoga never literally abandon Karma and beg. But, though there may be this seeming difference in outward action, the essential principles of Renunciation (saṁnyāsa) and Abandonment (tyāga) continue in the Path of Karma-Yoga; and therefore, the Gītā lays down the ultimate

doctrine that there is no opposition between the Desireless Karma-Yoga and the arrangement of states of life according to the Smṛti texts.

From what has been stated above, it might be thought by some that an attempt has been made in the Gītā to harmonise the Karma-Yoga with the Path of Renunciation, because, the Path of Renunciation prescribed by the Smṛtis was an ancient religion; and that the Path of Karma-Yoga was a later creation. But, anybody will see that such is not the case, if the matter is considered from the historical point of view. I have already stated before that the most ancient form of the Vedic religion consisted of the Karma-kāṇḍa. By the Knowledge imparted in the Upaniṣads, the Karma-kāṇḍa gradually became inferior, and Saṁnyāsa in the shape of Abandonment of Action gradually came into vogue. This was the second step in the growth of the tree of the Vedic religion. But even in those times, philosophers like Janaka

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and others used to harmonise the Karma-kāṇḍa with the Knowledge propounded in the Upaniṣads, and to go on desirelessly performing Actions till death. Therefore, this second stage of the tree of Vedic religion must be said to fall into two classes; the one was the class to which Janaka and

others belonged, and the other was the class to which Yājñavalkya and others belonged. The arrangement of stages of life made in the Smṛtis was the third step. But, this third step was also two-fold like the second step. It is true that the Smṛti texts praise the worth of the- fourth state of life entailing the Abandonment of Action; but at the same time, the Karma-Yoga, which included Knowledge and which was followed by Janaka and others, has also been mentioned by the Smṛti texts as an alternative for the Saṁnyāsa state. For instance, take the Manu-Smṛti, which is the foundation of all the Smṛti texts. It is stated in the sixth chapter of this Smṛti, that a man should gradually rise from the state of the celibate to the states of the house-holder and of the denizen of the woods, and should ultimately take up the fourth state, which entailed the Abandonment of Action. But, when this description of the fourth state, that is, of the religion of ascetics (Yatins) is over, Manu, after saying by way of introduction that: "I have so far described the religion of Yatins, that is, of Saṁnyāsins; I will now explain the Karma- Yoga of the Vedic Saṁnyāsins", and explaining how the state of the householder is superior to the other states, goes on to describe the Karma-Yoga to be followed in the desireless state of the householder, as an alternative for the Saṁnyāsa state or for the religion of Yatins (Manu. 6.86 – 96); and later on in the twelfth chapter, this religion has been described as the "Vedic Karma-Yoga", and it is stated that this path is as niḥśreyasakara, that is, as productive of Release as the fourth state (Manu. 12. 86 – 90).

The doctrine of Manu also finds a place in the Yājñavalkya-Smṛti. In the third chapter of this Smṛti, after the description of the religion of Yatins is over, the conjunction 'or' (athavā) is used, and then it is stated that even the householder, who is a devotee of Knowledge, and who speaks the truth, attains Release (without taking Saṁnyāsa), (See Yajña. 3. 204 and 205). In the same way, Yāska has

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stated in his Nirukta, that the ascetics, who abandon Action, as also the Karma-Yogins, who perform Action though they have acquired Knowledge, go to the next life by the devayāna path (Ni. 14.9). Another authority in support of this proposition, besides Yāska, is of the writers of the Dharma-Sūtras. These Dharma-Sūtras are in prose and scholars believe them to be earlier in point of time than the Smṛti texts, which are written in verse. We are not concerned at the moment with considering whether this opinion is correct or not. Whether it is correct or incorrect, the only important thing we have to consider in the present chapter is that the importance of the state of a householder or of the Karma-Yoga has, in these works, been stated to be more than has been done in the statements quoted above from the Manu and the Yājñavalkya Smṛtis. Manu and Yājñavalkya have referred to the Karma-Yoga as an alternative for the fourth state; but Baudhāyana and Āpastamba have not done so; and they have clearly stated

that the state of the house-holder is the most important state, and that immortality is subsequently attained in that state only. In the Baudhāyana Dharma-Sūtras, after referring to the statement "jāyamāno vai brahmanas tribhir ṛṇavā jāyate" – that is, "every Brahmin in coming to birth brings with himself the burden of three debts" etc. found in the Taittirīya-Saṁhitā, it is stated that the man who takes shelter into the state of a householder, which entails the performance of sacrificial ritual etc., in order to discharge these debts, attains the sphere of the Brahman; and that those who attach importance to the state of celibacy, or of Saṁnyāsa, are ruined (Bau. 2.6.11.33 and 34); and there is a similar statement also in the Āpastamba Sūtras (Āpa. 2.9.24.8). It is not that the fourth state of Saṁnyāsa has not been described in these two Dharma-Sūtras; but, even after describing that state, the importance of the state of the householder has been stated to be greater. From this fact, and especially from the fact that the adjective 'Vedic' has been applied to the Karma-Yoga in the Manu-Smṛti, the following two things become absolutely clear, namely, (i) that even in the times of the Manu-Smṛti, the state of the householder, which entailed the

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Desireless Karma-Yoga, was considered more ancient than the Path of Renunciation by Abandonment of Action; and that (ii) from the point of view of Release, it was considered as

meritorious as the fourth state. As the leaning of the commentators on the Gītā was towards Saṁnyāsa, or towards Devotion coupled with Abandonment of Action, the above statements from the Smṛtis are not found referred to in their commentaries; but, though they have disregarded those statements, the ancientness of the Karma-Yoga is not thereby in any way diminished. Nay, one may even without objection say that as this path of Karma-Yoga was the more ancient one, the writers of the Smṛtis had to accept it as an alternative for the Path of Renunciation. This is the Vedic Karma-Yoga. This was practised by Janaka and others before the times of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But, as the Blessed Lord added the creed of Devotion to that Path, and gave it further circulation, His religion came to be known as the 'Bhāgavata Doctrine'. I shall later on consider historically how this Karma-Yoga again came to be looked upon as inferior, and the Path of Renunciation acquired greater importance, although the Bhagavadgītā had in this way declared Karma-Yoga to be superior to Renunciation. All that I have to say for the present is that the Karma-Yoga is not later in point of time than the Path prescribed by the Smṛtis, and that it has been in vogue from the ancient Vedic times.

My readers will now appreciate the inner reason for the words "iti śrīmad Bhagavadgītāsu upaṇiṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre", used at the end of each chapter of the Gītā. The Upaniṣad which has been sung by the Blessed Lord contains the Brahmavidyā like all other Upaniṣads. But, these words

mean that it does not contain only the Brahmavidyā, and that the principal object of the Bhagavadgītā was to support only the Yoga or the Karma- Yoga, out of the two paths of Sāṃkhya and Yoga (the Vedantic Saṃnyāsa, and the Vedantic Karma- Yoga), which are included in the Brahmavidyā. Nay, one may even without objection say that the Bhagavadgītōpaniṣad is the most important treatise on the science of Karma-Yoga; because, although the Karma-Yoga has been in vogue from the times of the Vedas, yet, except for some few references

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like "kurvann eveha karmāṇi" (Īśā. 2), or "ārambhya karmāṇi guṇānvitāni " (Śve. 6.4), or, "simultaneously with the Vidya ritual, such as, svādhyāya etc., should be performed" (Tai. 1.9), there is nowhere any detailed explanation of the Karma-Yoga in any of the Upaniṣads. The Bhagavadgītā is the principal authoritative treatise on that subject; and it is also proper from the point of view of poetic literature that that Bhārata; which describes the lives of the great heroes in the Bhārata- land should also explain the theory of the Karma-Yoga in its relation to Metaphysics. This also now clearly explains, why the Bhagavadgītā was included in the Prasthānatrayī; Although the Upaniṣads are fundamental, yet, as they have- been written by various Ṛṣis, the ideas contained in them are diverse, and in some places apparently mutually contradictory. It was, therefore, necessary to include the Upaniṣads in the



Prasthānatrayī, along with the Vedānta-Sūtras, which attempted to harmonise them. If the Gītā did not contain, anything more than the Upaniṣads and the Vedānta-Sūtras,. there would be no point in including the Gītā in the Prasthānatrayī. But, the trend of the Upaniṣads is principally towards the Path of Renunciation, and they support chiefly the Jñāna-mārga (Path of Knowledge); and when one says that the Bhagavadgītā supports the Karma-Yoga based on Devotion simultaneously with Knowledge, the distinction of the Bhagavadgītā becomes clear, and at the same time the appropriateness of the three parts of the Prasthānatrayī also becomes clear. Because, if the authoritative treatises on the Vedic religion had not dealt with both the Vedic paths of Jñāna and Karma (Sāṃkhya and Yoga), the Prasthānatrayī. would to that extent have remained incomplete. Some people think, that as the Upaniṣads are ordinarily in support of Saṃnyāsa, there will arise a mutual opposition between the three parts of the Prasthānatrayī, if the Gītā. is explained as being in support of Action; and the authoritativeness of the three parts will be endangered. Such a doubt would be appropriate if the Sāṃkhya or Saṃnyāsa was the only true Vedic Path to Release; but, I have shown above, that in some Upaniṣads at any rate, such as the Īśāvāsyā and others, the Karma-Yoga has been specifically

mentioned. Therefore, if one lays down the proposition, as has been done in the Gītā, that the Vedic Religion is not to be looked upon as a one-handed man, that is, as being only in support of Saṁnyāsa ; and that although it has only one head, namely, Brahmavidyā, yet, Sāṁkhya and Karma- Yoga, which, from the point of view of Release, are of equal value, are its right hand and left hand respectively, there remains no opposition between the Gītā and the Upaniṣads. Nay, as the Upaniṣads support the one path, and the Gītā the other path, these two parts of the Prasthānatrayī are seen to be mutually co-operative like two hands, instead of being mutually antagonistic. In the same way, the Gītā does not acquire the subordinate position of merely repeating what has already been said, which it would acquire if it is said to be supporting only what the Upaniṣads have maintained. As the doctrine-supporting commentators on the Gītā have neglected this question, I have shortly set out in the following table in two columns, opposite each other, the principal reasons which the supporters of the two independent paths of Sāṁkhya and Yoga adduce in support of their respective doctrines, in order that the similarity and the difference between the two should be easily ascertained. This tabular statement will also clearly show the important differences between the arrangement of the states of life according to the Smṛtis and the original Bhāgavata religion:—

**After acquisition of the BRAHMAVIDYĀ or the KNOWLEDGE of the  
ĀTMAN`**

	<b>KARMA-SAMNYĀSA (Sāṃkhya)</b>	<b>KARMA-YOGA (Yoga)</b>
1.	Release is obtained only by Knowledge of the Ātman, and not by Karma. The happiness of heaven, obtained by credulously performing sacrificial ritual, is inconstant.	Release is obtained only by Knowledge of the Ātman, and not by Karma. The happiness of heaven, obtained by credulously performing sacrificial ritual, is inconstant.

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2.	In order to acquire the Knowledge of the Ātman, the Mind must be made steady, desireless, apathetic, and equable by means of the control of the organs.	In order to acquire the Knowledge of the Ātman, the Mind must be made steady, desireless, apathetic and equable by means of the control of the organs.
3.	Therefore, break the bonds of the objects of pleasure, which please the organs, and be free.	Therefore, do not give up the objects which please the organs; but maintain your association with them apathetically, that is

		<p>desirelessly, and test the control you have over the organs. Desirelessness does not mean inactivity.</p>
4.	<p>Action, which is productive of Desire, is causative of pain and bondage.</p>	<p>If you consider in what unhappiness and bondage lies, you will see that lifeless (acetana) Karma does not bind or leave anybody; and that the cause of bondage and unhappiness is the Desire of the hope of reward existing in the Mind of the doer.</p>
5.	<p>Therefore, though Action has to be performed until the mind is purified, it must ultimately be given up.</p>	<p>Therefore, even after the purification of the Mind, perform all Action courageously and enthusiastically, giving up the Hope for Fruit. One cannot give up Karma, even if one wishes to give it up. Karma is the Creation; and it has no rest</p>
6.	<p>As Karma performed in connection with sacrificial ritual does not create bondage, there is no</p>	<p>All Actions which are performed with a desireless frame of mind or with the idea of dedicating them to the</p>

	objection to its being performed during the stats of a house-holder.	Brahman are a great 'Yajña' (sacrifice). Therefore, all duties, which are appropriate to one's own- status in life should be performed desirelessly, as pure duties; and these should be performed continually.
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7.	As the natural needs of the Body cannot he escaped from, it Is not improper to beg, for earning one's livelihood, after having taken Saṁnyāsa.	Begging for earning one's subsistence is also Karma, and that too, 'disgraceful'. If this Karma is to be performed, why not perform all other Actions desirelessly? Besides, if the state of a householder is done away with, who is going to give you food?
8.	After Acquisition of Knowledge, no duty remains to you for your own benefit; and there is no necessity to act for universal welfare.	After Acquisition of Knowledge, although no duty remains to you for your own benefit, yet, you cannot escape Karma. Therefore, whatever duties are enjoined

		<p>by the Śāstras should be performed with a selfless (nirmama) frame of mind, saying: 'I do not want it,' and with an eye to 'universal welfare'. No one can escape lokasaṃgraha (universal welfare). For instance, see the life of the Blessed Lord Himself.</p>
9.	<p>Nevertheless, persons of high authority may, till death, carry on their duties, after Acquisition of Knowledge, as was done by Janaka and others, only as but exceptions.</p>	<p>According to the arrangement of the four castes, which is based on the divisions of the qualities (guṇa- vibhāga), everyone acquire by birth great or small authority; and this authority, which is acquired according to one's own state in life (dharma) must be exercised, till death, desirelessly and without exception; because, this cycle of activities has been created by the Parameśvara for the maintenance of the world.</p>

10.

But in any case, Saṁnyāsa in the shape of abandonment of Action is the best. The duties of the three other states are the means, or the preparatory stages, for the purification of the Mind; and there is an inherent opposition between Jñāna and Karma. Therefore, acquire purification of the Mind as early as possible in the earlier stages of life, and after having acquired Knowledge, take ultimately to Saṁnyāsa in the shape of Abandonment of the Action. If you have acquired purification of the Mind with birth or in young age, there is no necessity of

It is true that by performing the Actions pertaining to worldly life in the manner enjoined by the Śāstras, one acquires the purification of the Mind. But, purification of the Mind is not the only use of Karma. Karma is necessary in order that the activities of the world should go on. In the same way, though there is an opposition between Jñāna and Desire-prompted Action, there is none between Jñāna and Desireless Action; and therefore, after the purification of the Mind, continue the Actions prescribed for the various castes, abandoning the hope of the Fruit of Action, and desirelessly, till death, for the benefit of the world. This is the true Saṁnyāsa; it is neither possible nor

	performing the duties pertaining to the state of a householder. The true state of Saṁnyāsa consists in the literal Abandonment of Action.	proper, to literally abandon Karma (Action) at any time.
11.	Even after Abandonment of Action, you must observe the rules of śama, dama, etc.	After Acquisition of Knowledge, take Saṁnyāsa in the shape of Abandonment of the Fruit of Action, and observe all the rules arising as a result of Self-identification (ātmaupamya), except śama, dama, etc.; and perform by means of this śama or peaceful frame of mind, all the, duties enjoined by the Śāstras, till death, for the purpose of universal welfare. Do not give up Desireless Action.



12.	This path is eternal, and has the support of the Śrutis as also of the Smṛtis.	This path is eternal, and has the support of the Śrutis as also of the Smṛtis.
13.	This path was adopted by Śuka, Yājñavalkya, and others.	Vyāsa, Vaśiṣṭha, Jaigīśavya, and others, as also Janaka, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and others followed this path.
<b>ULTIMATE RELEASE (mokṣa).</b>		

Both these paths or Niṣṭhās are based on the Knowledge of the Brahman, and as the Desirelessness or peacefulness of the Mind is a common factor in both, both the paths ultimately lead to Release (Gī. 5.5.). The important difference between the two is that in the one case Karma (Action) is abandoned after Jñāna (Knowledge), and in the other, Desire-prompted (kāmya) Action is abandoned, and Desireless Action is continued.

These two paths of abandoning Action and not abandoning Action have both been adopted and followed by Jñānins after the Acquisition of Knowledge. But Action can be abandoned or performed even when Knowledge has not been acquired. It is, therefore, also necessary to shortly consider here this Action

or Abandonment of Action, which is based, not on Knowledge, but on Ignorance. That is why three varieties of Abandonment of Action have been mentioned in the eighteenth chapter of the Gītā. Some persons abandon Action for fear of physical labour, though they have not acquired Knowledge. This is described in the Gītā as a 'rājasa tyāga' (Gī. 18.8). In

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the same way, many persons perform sacrificial ritual only with religious faith (śraddhā), though they have not acquired Knowledge. But the Gītā says this path of performing Action leads only to heaven and not to Release (Gī. 9.20). As the performance of sacrificial ritual prescribed by the Śrutis is not now in vogue, some persons think that the doctrine of the Gītā relating to the pure Karma-mārga supported by the Mīmāṃsā school, is not of much use in these days. But, such a belief is not correct; because, although the sacrificial ritual enjoined by the Śrutis has gone out of vogue, the ritual prescribed by the Smṛtis, in the shape of the duties enjoined on the four castes, is still in existence. Therefore, the dictum of the Gītā with reference to people who perform Desire-prompted Actions like sacrificial ritual, with religious faith, though ignorantly, also applies in the present day to people who perform the duties enjoined on the four castes, with religious faith, though without Knowledge. If one visualises the activities of the world, it will be seen that the majority of persons in society perform

their various duties, keeping religious faith in the Śāstras, and according to the accepted moral code. But such persons have not fully acquired the Knowledge of the Parameśvara. Therefore, these credulous persons, who perform sacrificial Karma, are in the same position as those who make calculations by mental arithmetic without understanding the reasons for that calculation given in Mathematics. As these persons perform the ritual in manner enjoined by the Śāstras and with religious faith, it is performed correctly, and will be productive of merit (puṇya) or of heaven. But, as the doctrine of the Śāstras themselves is that Release cannot be obtained except by Knowledge, such persons cannot possibly obtain any result more valuable than heaven. Therefore, those persons who wish to obtain that immortality which is beyond the happiness of heaven – and this is, indeed, the true highest ideal of man – should, in the beginning, as a means, and later on, that is, in the state of perfection, for the purpose of universal welfare, (which means, so long as life exists), accept the path of performing Action desirelessly, with a frame of mind chastened by Knowledge, and with the Realisation that, 'in all created beings there is only one Ātman'.

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Of all the paths of leading one's life, this path is the best. In the tabular statement above, I have called this path, Karma- Yoga, on the authority of the Gītā; and it is usually referred to by

some writers as the Path of Action (karma-mārga), or the Activistic Path (pravṛtti-mārga). But the words Karma- mārga or Pravṛtti-mārga ordinarily also connote the heaven-producing path of performing Action, with religious faith, but without Knowledge. It, therefore, becomes necessary to use two distinct words in order to make clear the difference between the Knowledge-less but Faith-full Karma, and the Desireless Karma performed with Knowledge; and for this reason, the Manu-Smṛti, as also the Bhāgavata, call Knowledge-less Karma, 'pravṛtta-karma', and Desireless Karma based on Knowledge, 'nivṛtta-karma' (Manu. 12.89; Bhāg. 7.5.47). But even these words are, in my opinion, not as unambiguous as they ought to be; because, the word 'nivṛtti' is ordinarily used as meaning 'recoiling (becoming parāvṛtta) from Karma'. In order that such a doubt should not remain, the word 'karma' is added after the word 'nivṛtta', and when that is done, the adjective 'nivṛtta' does not mean 'abstaining from Karma'; and we get the interpretation 'nivṛtta-karma' = 'Desireless Action'. But whatever is done, so long as the word 'nivṛtta' is used, the idea of the Abandonment of Action inevitably enters the mind. Therefore, in my opinion, it is better to call the path of performing Desireless Action, after the acquisition of Knowledge, by the name 'Karma-Yoga' instead of calling it 'nivṛtti' or 'nivṛtta-karma'; because, when the word 'Yoga' is tacked on after the word 'Karma', it naturally means "the device of performing Action without obstructing Release," and Karma based on ignorance is also naturally

eliminated. Nevertheless, if one wishes to refer to this path as 'Karma-mārga' or 'Pravṛtti-mārga', without forgetting that the Karma-Yoga of the Gītā is based on Knowledge, there is no objection to the same being done; and in some places, I myself have used the same words for indicating the Karma-Yoga of the Gītā for diversity of language. I have in the following tabular statement shown the opinion of the Gītā as to the two paths of Abandonment of Action and Performance of Action, which are based respectively on Knowledge and Ignorance.

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	WAY OF LEADING LIFE	GRADE	ULTIMATE SPHERE	
1	Performing Actions only for one's own happiness, egotistically, with an ungodly (āsurī) frame of mind, or hypocritically, or being prompted by avarice. (Gī. 16.16) – the ASURA, or UNGODLY path.	LOWEST	HELL	
2	Although the Knowledge of the form of the Parameśvara by the Realisation that there is only one Ātman in all created beings has not been acquired, performing all Desire- prompted Actions with faith, and according to moral principles, and consistently with the injunctions of the Śāstras, or the Vedas. (Gī. 2.41-44 and 9.20) – PURE KARMA, or TRAYĪ -DHARMA or MĪMĀṂSAKA-MĀRGA.	MEDIUM (Best, according to the Mīmāṃsā school)	HEAVEN (Release, according to the Mīmāṃsaka)	
3	After the Acquisition of the Knowledge of the Parameśvara, by the desireless performance of the duties enjoined by the Śāstras, giving up all Action, and finding happiness only in Jnani. (Gī. 5.2) – PURE JÑĀNA or the SĀMĀNYA or the SMĀRTA-MĀRGA.	SUPERIOR	RELEASE (mokṣa).	The two paths (niṣṭhā) of the Gītā
4	Performing life-long Desireless Actions, in the beginning, for the purification of the Mind, and afterwards, that is, after having thereby acquired the Knowledge of the Parameśvara, for universal welfare (lokaśānti-graha), in the same way as was done by the Blessed Lord. (Gī. 5.2) – the KNOWLEDGE-ACTION path or KARMA-YOGA, or the BHĀGAVATA-MĀRGA.	BEST OF ALL	RELEASE (mokṣa).	

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In short, although Action (Karma) is not necessary for obtaining Release, yet, the Gītā has declared the path of desirelessly and continuously performing Action as the best path of all, for other co-existent reasons, namely, because it is, in the first place, unavoidable, and secondly because, it is essential for the maintenance of the world. Or, the ultimate

doctrine of the Gītā is that the union of Action and Spiritual Knowledge is the best, and that mere Action or mere Spiritual Knowledge is each one-sided, according to the statement of Manu that: "kṛta buddhiṣu kartāraḥ kartṛṣu brahma-vādinah" (Manu. 1.97).

Really speaking this chapter ought to end here. But, it is necessary to say something here about the quotations given above in various places for showing that the doctrine laid down by the Gītā has the authority of the Śruti and the Smṛti; because, many persons have come to the conclusion that all the Upaniṣads support Renunciation (saṁnyāsa or nivṛtti) by reading the doctrine-supporting commentaries on the Upaniṣads. I do not say that the Path of Renunciation is not supported by the Upaniṣads at all. It is stated in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (4.4.22), that after they have Realised that the Parabrahman is the only Reality, "some Jñānins do not any more entertain in their hearts the desire for children (putraiṣaṇā), or the desire for wealth (vittaiṣaṇā), or the desire for higher worlds (lokaṣaṇā), and saying: 'what have we to do with children? the whole world is our Self (Ātman)', they go about the world contentedly, and earn their livelihood by begging". But it is nowhere stated in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka that all persons who have Realised the Brahman should follow this path. Nay, there is a statement in this very Upaniṣad that that king Janaka, to whom this advice was given, had reached the highest peak of the Knowledge of the Brahman, and had

become immortal. But, it is nowhere stated that he had, like Yājñavalkya, given up the world and taken Saṁnyāsa.

Therefore, it becomes quite clear that the

Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad accepted both the Desireless Karma-Yoga of Janaka and the Path of Abandonment of Action followed by Yājñavalkya, as alternative paths; and the author of the Vedānta-Sūtras has come to the same conclusion (Ve. Sū, 3.4.15). The

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Kaṭhopaniṣad has gone even further than this, and, as I have stated before in the fifth chapter, it says, according to me, that the Desireless Karma-Yoga is the only proper path of life- The same conclusion is arrived at in the Chāndogyopaniṣad (8.15.1), and there is a clear statement in it at the end, that "the Jñānin who first finishes his course of education at the hands of his preceptor, and thereafter lives in his family and follows the rules of Ethics and morality, goes to the sphere of the Brahman and does not return"; and sentences from the Taittirīya and the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣads having the same purport have been quoted by me above (Tai. 1.9 and Śve. 6.4). Besides, we do not see it stated in the Upaniṣads, that those who have advised the Knowledge of the Brahman to others, or their disciples who had acquired the Knowledge of the Brahman, adopted Renunciation in the shape of Abandonment of Action, except one or two like Yājñavalkya. On the other



hand, they seem to have been householders, from the descriptions which have been given of them. One cannot, therefore, look upon all the Upaniṣads as supporting Saṁnyāsa, and has to say that some of them mention the alternative paths of Saṁnyāsa and Karma-Yoga, whereas others support the union of Jñāna and Karma (jñāna-karma-samuccaya). But, the- doctrine-supporting commentaries on the Upaniṣads do not show these differences, and they usually say that all the Upaniṣads support only one Path – and that too principally the Saṁnyāsa Path. In short, these doctrine-supporting commentators have dealt with both the Gītā and the Upaniṣads in the same way; that is to say, these commentators have had to stretch and mutilate some hymns in the Upaniṣads, as has been done by them in the matter of some of the stanzas in the Gītā. Take, for example, the case of Īśāvāsyopaniṣad, Though this Upaniṣad is short, that is, consisting only of eighteen' stanzas, it is considered to be of greater importance than the' other Upaniṣads; because, this Upaniṣad has been mentioned in the Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā, whereas the other Upaniṣads have been mentioned in the Āraṇyakas; and it is generally accepted that the Brahmanas are of lesser importance than the Samhitas, and the Āraṇyakas of lesser importance than the Brahmanas. This Īśāvāsyopaniṣad is from top to bottom in support of the harmonising of Jñāna and Karma. It is stated in the very

first hymn (mantra) of this Upaniṣad that, "whatever existed in the world must be considered as 'Īśāvāsyā', that is, located in the Parameśvara; and in the second hymn, there is a clear statement that, "one should desire to live for a hundred years while performing Action desirelessly". This statement from the Īśāvāsyā has been quoted as an authority for the harmonising of Jñāna and Karma, wherever there was occasion to deal with the Karma-Yoga in the Vedānta-Sūtras, as also in other places. But, the Īśāvāsyā Upaniṣad does not rest there. In order to support the statement made in the second stanza, it subsequently starts the exposition of 'avidyā', that is, Karma, and 'vidyā ', that is, Jñāna; and in the ninth stanza, it is stated that "persons who devote themselves only to avidyā or Karma enter darkness, and those who are steeped merely in vidyā or the Knowledge of the Brahman enter a still darker darkness". Having in this way shown the inferiority of pure avidyā (Karma), and pure vidyā (Jñāna), this Upaniṣad explains in the eleventh stanza the necessity of the union of 'vidyā ' and 'avidyā' in the following words:-

vidyām cā 'vidyām ca yas tad vedobhayam saha |  
avidyayā mṛtyuṁ tīrtvā vidyayā 'mṛtam aśnute || (Īśā.  
11).

The plain and clear meaning of this stanza is: "that man, who understands both vidyā (Jñāna) and avidyā (Karma) at the same time, goes (easily) through the affairs of the 'mṛtyu' that

is, of the perishable illusory world, by means of avidyā that is, Karma; and attains immortality by means of vidyā, that is, of the Realisation of the Brahman"; and the same idea is repeated in the three succeeding stanzas (Īśā. 12 – 14), in which vidyā is referred to as 'sambhūti', that is, the original cause of the world, and avidyā, which is different from that vidyā, as 'asambhūti' or 'vināśa'. From this, it becomes quite clear that the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad is in favour of the simultaneous possession (ubhayaṁ saha) of vidyā and avidyā. In the above stanza, the words 'mṛtyu and 'amṛta ' are mutual opposites, just like 'vidyā' and 'avidyā'. Out of them, amṛta quite clearly means the imperishable Brahman, and it follows that mṛtyu, which is the opposite of it, means the perishable mṛtyu-loka (mortal world) or the life in this world; and both these, words

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have been used in the same sense in the Nāsadiya-Sūkta of the Ṛg-veda (Ṛg. 10.129. 2); When one interprets the- eleventh stanza of the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad, which has been quoted above, taking these clear meanings of the words vidyā etc., that is, taking vidyā as meaning Jñāna, avidyā as meaning Karma, amṛta as meaning the Brahman, and mṛtyu as meaning the mortal world, it will be clearly seen that the simultaneous possession (ekakālīna-samuccaya) of vidyā and avidyā is mentioned in the first line of this stanza: the separate results of both are mentioned in the second part of the stanza, in

order to further emphasise that statement. Both these results are considered desirable by the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad, and the simultaneous possession of Jñāna and Karma has been advocated in this Upaniṣad. Carrying on properly the affairs of the mortal world, or going through those affairs successfully is called 'loka-saṁgraha' in the Gītā. It is true that obtaining Release is the duty of every man; yet, as it is also essential that he should simultaneously bring about universal welfare (loka-saṁgraha), the Gītā has laid down the doctrine that the Jñānin should not give up this Karma, which is productive of universal welfare; and the same doctrine has been propounded in the line, "avidyayā mṛtyuṁ tīrtvā vidyayā 'mṛtam aśnute" mentioned above, with only a verbal difference. In shorty it will be seen that not only is the Gītā consistent with the Upaniṣads, but that the proposition definitely propounded by the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad has been accepted in toto in the Gītā. The Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa is a part of that very Vājasaneyī Saṁhitā, of which the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad is a part; and the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad is to be found in the Āraṇyakas of the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa; and this ninth hymn (mantra) of the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad, namely, "persons who are steeped in pure Knowledge (vidyā), that is, in the Realisation of the Brahman, enter a still greater darkness" has been literally adopted in it (Br. 4.4.10). This Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad contains the story of the King Janaka, and the illustration of that Janaka has been taken by the Blessed Lord in support of the theory of Karma-Yoga (Gī. 3.20). This establishes all the more firmly, the

relation between the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad and the Karma-Yoga of the Bhagavadgītā referred to by me above.

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But those commentators whose sectarian doctrine is that there is only one path mentioned in each and every Upaniṣad for obtaining Release, and that too the Path of Indifference (vairagya) or Saṁnyāsa (Renunciation), and that the Upaniṣads cannot prescribe two paths, are driven to somehow or other put a stretched and different meaning on this clear sacred hymn (mantra) in the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad; otherwise, these hymns negate their doctrines; and that is a thing they do not want. Therefore, in commenting on the eleventh hymn in the Śāṁkarabhāṣya, the word 'vidyā' is not taken to mean Jñāna (Knowledge), but upāsanā (worship). It is not that the word 'vidyā' does not mean 'upāsanā' (worship). In the phrases 'Śāṇḍilya-vidyā' etc. 'vidyā.' means 'upāsanā'. But, that is not the principal meaning of that word. It is not that Śrī Śāṁkarācārya did not or could not have realised this fact. Nay, it is impossible that he did not realise it; because, there are statements in the other Upaniṣads, such as, "vidyayā vindate 'mṛtam" (Kena. 2.12); or "prāṇasyādhyātmaṁ vijñāyāmṛtam aśnute" (Praśna. 3.12); and in the seventh prapāṭhaka of the Maitryupaniṣad, the hymn "vidyām cā 'vidyām ca" etc., being the eleventh hymn of the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad, has been taken literally; and immediately before it, the hymn in Kaṭha. 2.4,

and after it, the hymn in Kaṭha. 2.5 are to be found; that is to say, these three hymns are to be found in the same place one after the other, and the central hymn is from the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad; and each of the three verses contains the word 'vidyā'. From this it follows, that according to the Maitryupaniṣad, the word 'vidyā' in the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad must be taken to mean the same thing as in the Kaṭhopaniṣad, that is to say, Jñāna. But, in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya on the Īśāvāsyā, it is stated that if the words 'vidyā' and 'amṛta' in the eleventh hymn of the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad are taken in their ordinary meaning of 'vidyā' = Knowledge of the Self, and amṛta = mokṣa, one will have to say that the union of Jñāna (vidyā) and Karma (avidyā) has been prescribed by this Upaniṣad; but, in as much as such a combination is logically incorrect, the words 'vidyā' and 'amṛta' must be taken in their respective inferior meanings of 'worship of a deity' and 'sphere of the deities' respectively. In short, in order that this hymn in the Īśāvāsyā should not

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falsify the principal doctrine of the Śāṃkara school that: "after the Acquisition of Knowledge, one must not perform Actions; because, the combination of Jñāna and Karma can never be logical", the eleventh hymn of the Īśāvāsyā has been interpreted, as mentioned above, in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya, by taking the inferior meaning of the word 'vidyā', with the clear

intention of harmonising all the statements in the Śrutis with the doctrine of the Śāṃkara school; and from the point of view of the justification of a doctrine, this mis-interpretation was not only important but necessary. But those, who do not accept the fundamental proposition that all the Upaniṣads must support only one particular line of thought, and that the Śrutis cannot prescribe two different modes of life, have no occasion to pervert the meanings of the words 'vidyā' and 'amṛta' in the above hymn. Although one accepts the principle that the Parabrahman is 'ekamevādvitīyam' (one, and one only), it does not follow that there cannot be more than one path of Realising that Para- brahman. As it is possible to have two stair-cases for going to the same floor, or two roads for going to the same place, so also can there be two methods or Niṣṭhās for acquiring Release; and it has, therefore, been clearly stated in the Bhagavadgītā that "loke 'smin dvividhā niṣṭhā". When it is once admitted that it is possible to have two Niṣṭhās (paths of Release), it does not become impossible that some Upaniṣads should describe the Jñāna-niṣṭhā, and others describe the Jñāna-Karma-combined Niṣṭhā. Necessarily, there does not remain any occasion to pervert the clear, natural, and unequivocal meaning of the words used in the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad on the ground that they are inconsistent with the Jñāna-niṣṭhā. There is another reason for saying that Śrīmat Śāṃkarācārya aimed rather at insisting on a homogeneity in the Upaniṣads on the question of the Saṃnyāsa-niṣṭhā than at accepting the clear meaning of the

hymn. In the Śāṃkara-bhāṣya on the Taittirīya Upaniṣad (Tai. 2. 1), only the portion "avidyayā mṛtyuṃ tīrtvā vidyayā 'mṛtam aśnute", out of the hymn in the Īśāvāsyā, has been given; and there has been joined to it a statement from the Manu-Smṛti (Manu. 12.104) that "tapasā kalmaṣaṃ hanti vidyayā 'mṛtam aśnute", and the

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word 'vidyā' in both, these lines has been taken by Śāṃkarācārya in only one meaning, namely, Brahma-jñāna, which is the original and primary meaning. But, here the Ācārya says that the word 'tīrtvā' = 'swimming over' implies that the action of swimming through the mortal sphere (mṛtyu-loka) is first completed, and afterwards (not simultaneously) the action of obtaining immortality by vidyā follows; but I need not point out that such an interpretation is inconsistent with the words "ubhayaṃ saha" in the first half of the hymn; and it seems that this meaning must have been left out in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya on the Īśāvāsyā, possibly for this reason. Whatever may be the case, this clearly shows why a different explanation of the eleventh hymn of the Īśāvāsyā was given in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya on it. This reason is merely a desire to support a doctrine, and those who do not accept the doctrinal vision of commentators, may not accept this explanation. I am certainly willing that, as far as possible, one should avoid having to give up an interpretation adopted by a



superman like Śrīmat Śaṁkarācārya But, such a position is bound to arise when one gives up the doctrinal vision; and, therefore, even other commentators have, before me, interpreted the hymns in the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad in a way different from that adopted in the Śaṁkarabhāṣya, that is to say, in the same way as has been done by me. For instance, in the commentary by Uvaṭācārya on the Vājasaneyī-Saṁhitā, and necessarily on the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad, it is stated in expounding the canon, 'vidyāṁ cā 'vidyāṁ ca' that, "vidyā means the Knowledge of the Ātman, and avidyā means Karma, and immortality or Release is obtained by the combination of both"; and Anantācārya has in his commentary on this Upaniṣad .accepted this interpretation, which combines Knowledge and Action; and he has ultimately clearly said that the doctrine expounded in this hymn is the same as that underlying the statement in the Gītā, that: "yat sām̐khyaiḥ prāpyate sthānam tad yogavṛ api gamyate" (Gī. 5.5); and that the words 'sām̐khya' and 'yoga' in this stanza in the Gītā

respectively connote 'Jñāna' and 'Karma'. [1] In the same way, Aparārkadeva has

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given the eleventh hymn of the Īśāvāsyā in his commentary on the Yājñavalkya-Smṛti (Yā. 3.57 and 205), and interpreted it as supporting the combination of Jñāna and Karma, as was done by Anantācārya. From this it will be clear to my readers, that I have not been the first person to interpret this hymn from the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad in a way different from that in which it has been interpreted in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya.

So far we have considered the hymn in the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad itself. Let us now consider shortly the statement "tapasā kalmaṣaṃ hanti vidyayā 'mṛtam aśnute" from the Manu-Smṛti

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[1] All these commentaries on the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad have been given in the edition of the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad printed in the Anandashram Press at Poona; and the commentary of Aparārka on the Yājñavalkya-Smṛti has also been separately printed in the Anandashram Press. The translation of the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad included in the translations of the Upaniṣads made by Prof. Max. Müller is not according to the Śāṃkarabhāṣya, and he has stated his reasons for doing so at the end of his translation (Sacred Book of the East Series Vol. I, p. 314 – 320). The commentary of Anantācārya had not come to the hands of Prof. Max. Müller; and he also does not seem to have understood why different meanings are given for the same words in different places in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya.

which has been quoted in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya. This is the 104th stanza of the twelfth chapter of the Manu-Smṛti, and that chapter deals with the Vedic Karma-Yoga, as will be seen from Manu. 12.86. In the course of the disquisition on the Karma-Yoga, Manu says,

tapo vidyā ca viprasya niḥśreyasakaram param ।

tapasā kalmaṣam hanti vidyayā 'mṛtam aśnute ॥

that is:— "tapa and (ca) vidya, these (that is, necessarily both) are producers of excellent Release to the Brahmin"; and having stated this in the first part of the stanza, he, in order to show the use of both these things, says in the second part of the stanza: "by tapa (religious austerity) all sin is annihilated, and by vidyā, one obtains amṛta, that is, Release". From this, it is quite clear that Manu had, in this place, implied the combination of Jñāna and Karma, and that he had in this stanza adopted the doctrine enunciated in the eleventh hymn in the Īśāvāsyā Upaniṣad. This meaning is further emphasised by the statements in the Hārīta Smṛti. This Hārīta-Smṛti is available independently, and is also included in the Narsimha-

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Purāṇa (Nṛ. Pu. 57 – 61). The Nṛsimha Purāṇa (61.9 – 11) and the Hārīta-Smṛti (7. 9 – 11) contain the following stanzas

regarding the combination of Knowledge (Jñāna) and Action (Karma):-

yathāśvā rathahīnāś ca rathāś cāśvair vinā yathā ।  
evaṁ tapaś ca vidyā ca ubhāv api tapasvinaḥ ॥  
yathānnaṁ madhusaṁyuktaṁ madhu cānnena  
saṁyutaṁ ।  
evaṁ tapaś ca vidyā ca saṁyuktaṁ bheṣajaṁ mahat ॥  
dvābhyāṁ eva hi pakṣābhyāṁ yathā vai pakṣiṇām gatiḥ  
।  
tathaiva jñānakarmabhyāṁ prāpyate brahma śāśvatam  
॥

that is, "In the same way, as horses without a chariot, or a chariot without horses (are of no use), the same is the case with the tapa of the tapasvin, and vidyā. In the same way, as anna (food) mixed with madhu (honey), and honey mixed with food become a potent medicine, so also do 'tapa' and 'vidyā', when combined, In the same way as birds acquire motion by means of two wings, so also is the immutable Brahman acquired as a result of the combination of Jñāna and Karma". These statements in the Hārīta-Smṛti are also to be found in the second chapter of the Vṛddhātreyā-Smṛti. From these statements, and especially from the illustrations which have been given in them, one clearly understands in what way the statements of the Manu-Smṛti are to be interpreted. I have stated before that Maim includes all the Karma (ritual or

Action) enjoined for the four castes in the word 'tapa' (Manu. 11.236); and it will now be seen that the observance of tapa and svādhyāya-pravacana which has been prescribed in the Taittirīyopaniṣad (Tai. 1.9), has been prescribed accepting the position of the combination of Jñāna and Karma. The same is the summary of the whole of the Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha; because, in the beginning of this book, Sūtīkṣṇa has asked whether Release is obtained by Jñāna alone, or by Karma alone, or by the combination of both; and in replying to that question, after first stating that, "just as the movement of birds in the sky is made by two wings, so also is Release obtained by the combination of Jñāna and Karma, and perfection is not attained by only one of them", by taking the illustration of the wings of the birds from the Hārīta-Smṛti, the Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha has been written in order to prove that

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proposition in detail (Yo. 1.1.6 – 9). Similarly, in the book itself, Vāśiṣṭha has again and again given to Rāma the advice that, "perform all your activities in life, keeping your mind pure like a jīvan-mukta" (Yo. 5.17. 18 – 26); or "as it is not possible to give up Action (Karma) so long as life lasts (Yo. 6. U. 2.42), perform the duty of protecting and maintaining that kingdom which has fallen on your shoulders by virtue of your caste" (Yo. 5.5.54 and 6, U. 213.50); and the summing up of the work, as also what Śrī Rāmacandra did afterwards, is consistent with

that advice. But, as the commentators on the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha, belonged to the Saṁnyāsa school, they have passed a judgment on their own hook, that Jñāna and Karma are not 'yugapat', that is, 'proper at the same time,' although the illustration of the two wings of a bird is perfectly clear in itself. But, this interpretation is a stretched, unintelligible, and doctrinal interpretation, as will be seen by anyone who reads the original work by itself, without the commentary. There is a well-known treatise in the Madras Presidency known as Gurujñāna-vāsiṣṭha-tattvasārāyaṇa, which is sub- divided into three parts, namely, Jñāna-kāṇḍa, Upasana- kāṇḍa and Karma-kāṇḍa. I have stated before that this work is not as old as it is made out to be. But, although, it might not be ancient, yet, as it accepts the position of the combination of Jñāna and Karma, it is necessary to mention it in this place. As the Vedānta in this work is Non-Dualistic, and as it lays a special emphasis on Desireless Action, the doctrine supported by it may safely be said to be different from the doctrine supported by Śrī Śaṁkarācārya, and independent. This doctrine is known on the Madras side as 'Anubhavādvaita'; and really speaking this is only an imitation of the Karma-Yoga in the Gītā. Yet, it is stated in it, that this conclusion is arrived at by all the 108 Upaniṣads, instead of supporting it on the authority of the Gītā; and besides, it also includes two new Gītās, namely the Rāma-gītā and the Sūrya-gītā. This book will correct the impression some persons have, that accepting the Monistic (advaita) theory amounts to an acceptance of the Abandonment of Action; and

it will now be clear from the authorities given above, that the statement that the Desireless Karma-Yoga is supported only

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by the Saṁhitās, the Brahmanas, the Upaniṣads, the Dharma-Sūtras, the Manu and Yājñavalkya-Smṛtis, the Mahābhārata, the Bhagavadgītā, the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha, and lastly by the Tattvasārāyaṇa, but is not acceptable to the Śrutis and the Smṛtis, and that the Śrutis and the Smṛtis support only the Path of Renunciation, is without any foundation whatsoever.

I have so far proved that in order to carry on the activities of the mortal world or for universal welfare, the simultaneous combination of Desireless Action, according to one's own qualification, with Release-giving Knowledge, is necessary according to the Gītā: or, as has been stated by the Maratha Poet Śivadina-kesari: "that man who has attained the highest ideal, attending also to his worldly activities; such a man is good indeed, he is good indeed II"; that this Path of Karma-Yoga has been in vogue from ancient times, and was accepted by Janaka and others; and that it is also known as the Bhāgavata religion, because, it was extended further and revived by the Blessed Lord. It is now necessary, from the point of view of general welfare (loka-saṁgraha), to deal with the question of how the scientists, who follow this path, carry on their worldly activities simultaneously 'with' the acquisition of

the highest ideal of man. But, as the present chapter has been lengthened out to a considerable, extent, I shall deal with this subject in the nest chapter.

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# CHAPTER XII.

## THE STATE AND THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SIDDHA (PERFECT).

### (SIDDHĀVASTHĀ AND SIDDHA- VYAVAHĀRA)

sarveṣāṃ yah suhṛn nityam sarveṣāṃ ca kīte ratāḥ ।

karmaṇā manasā vācā sa dharmam veda jājale ॥ [1]

~ Mahābhārata, Śānti. (361. 9).

That school of thought according to which nothing remains to be done by way of duty after a man has acquired the Knowledge of the Brahman and his mind has become extremely equable and desireless, and according to which a Jñānin should, on that account, give up entirely the painful and insipid activities of a transient worldly life with an apathetic frame of mind, can never think that the Karma-Yoga, or the

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[1] "That man, who, by his actions, by his mind, and by his speech is continually engrossed in the welfare of others, and who is always a friend of others, he alone, Jājali, may be said to have understood what Morality (dharma) is".

mode of life appropriate to the state of a householder, is a science which deserves consideration. They admit that before a man takes Saṁnyāsa, his Mind must have been purified and Know- ledge acquired; and they, therefore, admit that one must lead one's worldly life in a way which will purify the Mind and make it sāttvika. But, if one believes that leading the worldly life till death is foolish, and considers it to be the highest duty of everyone in this life to renounce the world (take Saṁnyāsa) as early as possible, Karma-Yoga has no independent importance; and the scholars, who belong to the School of Renunciation, do not trouble to deal with the question of the doable and the not-doable in the state of a householder, beyond, concisely and when occasion arises, considering how one should lead one's worldly life, and advising that one should go up the ladder of the four states of life (āśrama) described by Manu and other philosophers and reach as quickly as possible the last step of that ladder, namely, of Saṁnyāsa. That is why Śrīmat Śaṁkarācārya, who was the principal protagonist of the Path of Renunciation in the Kaliyuga, has in his commentary on the Gītā

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either belittled the statements in the Gītā advising Energism or considered them to be merely laudatory, and drawn the ultimate conclusion of the Gītā that the whole of it has supported the doctrine of the Abandonment of Action (karma-

saṁnyāsa); or why other commentators have, consistently with their own doctrines, stated the import of the Gītā to be that the Blessed Lord advised Arjuna on the battle-field to follow only the renunciatory paths of Release, namely, the path of pure Devotion, or the Pātañjala-Yoga. There is no doubt that the Knowledge of the Absolute Self included in the Path of Renunciation is faultless; and that the equability of Reason, or the desireless state of mind produced by it, is acceptable to and admitted by the Gītā. Nevertheless, the opinion of the Saṁnyāsa school, that one must entirely abandon Action in order to obtain Release is not acceptable to the Gītā; and I have shown in detail in the last chapter that the most important doctrine laid down by the Gītā is, that the Jñānin must, even after the acquisition of Knowledge, perform all the activities of life, with the help of the feeling of indifference to the world and the equability of mind, which results from the Realisation of the Brahman. When it is admitted that (i) the deletion of Knowledge-full (jñāna-yukta) Action from the world will result in the world becoming blind and being destroyed; and that! ii even Jñānins must desirelessly perform all the duties of worldly life, and so give to ordinary people a living example of a good and pure life, since it is the desire of the Blessed Lord that the world should not be so destroyed and that its activities should go on without a hitch and that (iii) this path is the most excellent and acceptable of all, it becomes necessary to consider in what way such a Jñānin performs the activities of his worldly life;

because, as the life of such a Jñānin is nothing but an example set by him to other people, the consideration of that example automatically discloses to us the device sought by us for making a true discrimination between morality (dharma) and immorality (adharma), between the doable (kārya) and the non-doable (akārya) and between the duty (kartavya) and the non-duty (akartavya). This is the important difference between the Path of Renunciation and the Path of Karma-Yoga. That

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man whose Pure Reason (vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ) has become capable of realising the identity, that "there is only one Ātman in all created things", on account of its having become steady by means of mental control, must also possess a Desire (vāsanā) which is pure. And when his Practical Reason (vāsanātmikā buddhiḥ) has in this way become pure, equable, mine-less (nirmama) and sinless, it is impossible that he should commit any sin or any Action obstructive of Release; because, (i) whatever Action is prompted by a pure desire, is bound to be pure, seeing that in the usual order of things, there is first a desire, and that such desire is followed by appropriate action; and (ii) whatever is pure, is promotive of Release. We have, therefore, in this way found such a preceptor as will give to us a visible reply, in the form of his own life, to the difficult question of the discrimination between what should be done and what should not be done (karmākarma-vicikitsā), or,

between what is a duty and what is not a duty (karyākarya-vyavasthiti), (Tai. 1.11.4; Gī. 3.21). Such a preceptor was standing in life before Arjuna in the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa: and this preceptor has, after clearing the doubt in the mind of Arjuna that a Jñānin must abandon such Action as warfare etc.

because it created bondage, given to Arjuna clear advice as to the device by which one can lead his life in this world, without committing sin and consistently with the science of the Absolute Self (adhyātma), and induced him to fight. But, it is not possible for everyone to get such preceptors; and one also ought not to entirely depend on the external activities of such saints, as has been mentioned by me towards the end of the third chapter, when I was considering the proverb "mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ" (i.e., "follow the path which has been followed by the great"). It is, therefore, necessary to minutely examine the course of life of those Jñānins, who are examples to the whole world, and to consider what the true fundamental element in that course of life is. This subject is known as the Science of Karma-Yoga; and the state and the actions of the Jñānins mentioned above, is the foundation of this science. If all men in this world become Knowers of the Ātman and Karma-yogins in this way, there would be no necessity of a Science of

Karma-Yoga. It is stated in one place in the Nārāyaṇīya religion, that:—

ekāntino hi puruṣā durlabhā bahavo nṛpa ।  
yady ekāntibhir ākīrṇaṁ jagat syāt kurunandana ॥  
ahiṁsakair ātmavidbhiḥ sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ ।  
bhavet kṛtayugaprāptiḥ āśīḥ karmavivarjitā ॥ (Śān.  
348.62, 63).

that is, "it is difficult to find many persons who fully and completely follow the Bhāgavata doctrine, which is 'Ekāntika', that is, Activistic. If this world is filled with Self-knowing: harmless Jñānins, following the Ekānta doctrine, who continually tax themselves for general welfare, all 'āśīḥ karma', that is, desire-prompted or selfish Action, will disappear from this world, and the Kṛta-yuga will come again!"; because, as all persons will be Jñānins in such a state of things, no one will cause harm to no one. Not only that, but everyone will always keep before his own mind in what the general welfare lies, and regulate his conduct accordingly, with a pure and desireless frame of mind. It is the opinion of our philosophers that such a state of society existed at some very ancient date, and that it will recur again (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 59.14); but Western scholars say on the authority of modern history, that though such a state of things never existed before, it is possible that such a state of things may come into existence, sometime or other in the future, as a result of the advancement of mankind. However, as I am not now concerned with history, I may

without being contradicted say, that according to both opinions, every person in this state, which is supposed to be the highest or the most perfect state of society, will be fully a Jñānin, and every Action of his is bound to be pure, beneficial, and moral, or the pinnacle of dutifulness. The well-known English biologist Spencer has expressed this opinion at the end of his work on Ethics; and he says that the same doctrine had been formerly laid down by the ancient Greek philosophers. [1] For example,

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the Greek philosopher Plato says in his work that, that Action which appears to be proper to the philosopher, must be beneficial or just; that ordinary persons do not understand these principles of Ethics; and that they must, therefore, look upon the decisions of philosophers as authoritative. Another Greek philosopher named Aristotle says in his book on Ethics (3. 4) that the decision given by a Jñānin is always correct, because, he has understood the true : and this decision or conduct of a Jñānin is exemplary for others. A third Greek philosopher, named Epicurus, in describing such an exemplary and highly cultivated Jñānin, says that he is " peaceful, equable, and probably always joyful like the Parameśvara; and

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[1] See Spencer's Data of Ethics, Chap. XV, pp. 215 – 218. Spencer has called this 'Absolute Ethics'.

that there is not the slightest harm, done by him to other people, or by other people to him". [1] My readers will realise how similar this description is to the description given in the Bhagavadgītā of the Steady-in-Mind (sthitaprajña), of the one who is beyond the three constituents (triguṇātīta), or of the highest Devotee (parama-bhakta), or the Brahman-merged (brahma-bhūta). In the Bhagavadgītā, the characteristics of the Sthitaprajña have been mentioned in three or four places in the following words, namely: "yasmān nodvijate loko lokān nodvijate ca yaḥ" (Gī. 12.15), i.e., "one, of whom people do not get tired, and who is not tired of people"; or, who is always cheerful, and always free from the doubles of joy and sorrow, fear and dislike, happiness and unhappiness, and is always content with himself ("ātmany evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ", Gī. 2.55); or, one whose Reason is not moved by the three constituents ("guṇair yo na vicālyate", Gī. 14.23); or, one for whom praise or adverse criticism, honour or dishonour is just the same, and who, realising the identity of one Ātman in all created things (Gī. 18.54). does his duty with an equable frame of mind, without Attachment,

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[1] Epicurus held the virtuous state to be a "tranquil, undisturbed, innocuous, non-competitive fruition, which approached most nearly to the perfect happiness of the Gods", who "neither suffered vexation in themselves, nor caused vexation to others". Spencer's Data of Ethics, p.278; Bain's Mental and Moral Science, Ed. 1875, p. 530. Such a person is known as the 'Ideal Wise Man'.



courageously, and enthusiastically; or, is "samaloṣṭāśmakāñcanaḥ" (Gī. 14.24), (i.e., one who looks upon earth, stone, and gold as the same ~Translator.); and this state is known as the State of the Perfect (siddhāvasthā), or the Brahmī state. The Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha and other works refer to this state as the state of being free from re-birth (jīvanmuktāvasthā). As this state is extremely difficult of accomplishment, the German philosopher Kant says that the description given by Greek philosophers of such a state, is not of the state of any living being; but that they have personified the 'Pure Desire', which is the root of all Ethics, in order to impress the elements of pure morality on the minds of people; and have created this picture of a super-Jñānin and moral person out of their own imagination. But, our philosophers say that such a state of things is not an imaginary state, and that it can be accomplished by man in this life by mental control and effort; and we have seen actual examples of such persons in our country. Nevertheless, such a thing is not a matter of ordinary occurrence, and there is possibly only one among thousands who makes any effort in this direction; and it is clearly stated in the Gītā that only one, out of the thousand who makes an effort in this direction, ultimately attains this beatific ideal state, at the end of innumerable lives (Gī. 7.3).

However difficult of accomplishment this state of a Sthitaprajña (sthitaprajñāvasthā) or this state of being free from re-birth (jīvan-muktāvasthā) may be, it follows from the description of such a man, which has been given above, that the man, who has once accomplished this ultimate state, does not need to be taught any laws about what should be done or should not be done, i.e., of Ethics; because, as the purest, the most equable and the most sinless frame of mind is the essence of morality, laying down laws of Ethics for such a Sthitaprajña would be as unreasonable as imagining that the Sun is surrounded by darkness, and holding up a torch for it. There may be a doubt as to whether or not a particular person has reached this highest of states. But, when once it has been established by whatever means that a particular person has reached this state, no proposition is possible, except the

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Metaphysical proposition mentioned above, regarding the merit or de-merit of his actions. Just as regal authority is vested in one independent person or collection of persons, and as, according to some Western jurists, the ruler is not governed by any laws, though the ruled are so governed, so also are the Sthitaprajñas vested with authority in the kingdom of Ethics. No Desire exists in their minds; and, therefore, they are not induced to perform Action by any motive, except the fact that it is a duty enjoined by the Śāstras; and therefore, the

words sin or meritorious action, morality or immorality, can never be applied to the conduct of such persons, who are filled by a stainless and pure desire. They have gone beyond the bounds of sin and merit. Śaṃkarācārya has said that:

nistraiguṇye pathi vicāritam ko vidhiḥ ko niṣedhaḥ ।

that is, "laws dictating what is proper and what improper do not apply to persons who have gone beyond the three constituents"; and Buddhistic writers have said that: "just as the purest diamond does not require to be polished, so are the actions of that person who has reached the state of Absolution (nirvāṇa) not required to be limited by rules of conduct" (Milindaprasna 4.5.7). This is the import of the statement, made by Indra to Pratardana in the Kauṣītakyupaniṣad (Kauṣī. 3.1), that the Self-knower (ātmajñānin) is "untouched by the sins of matricide, patricide, or infanticide"; or of the statement in the Gītā (Gī. 18.17), that "a man who has totally lost the feeling of individuation (ahaṃkāra) is untouched by sin or merit, even if he kills others (See Pañcadaśī 14.16 and 17); and the same principle has been repeated in the Buddhistic work called 'Dhammapada' (See Dhammapada, stanzas 294 and 295). [1] Nay, according to me, the statement of St. Paul,

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[1] The statement from the Kauṣītakyupaniṣad is: "yo mām vijānīyati nāśya kenacit karmaṇā loko mīyate na maṭṭvadhena na piṭṭvadhena na steyena na bhṛuṇahatyayā"; and the stanzas in the Dhammapada are as follows:-

mātaraṃ pitaraṃ hantvā rājāno dve ca khattiye ।

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the disciple of the Lord Christ, in the New Testament of the Bible that: "all things are lawful for me" (1. Cori. 6.12; Romans 8.2), or the statement of St. John that: "it is not possible that any sin is committed by those who have become the sons

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raṭṭhaṃ sānucaraṃ hantvā anīgho yāti brāhmaṇo || (294)

mātaram pitaram hantvā rājāno dve ca sotthiye |

veyyagdha pañcamaraṃ hantvā anīgho yāti brāhmaṇo || (295)

(that is, (294) "in killing a mother or a father, or two kings of a warrior race, or destroying a whole kingdom with its inhabitants, a Brahmin (still) remains sinless"; (295) "in killing a mother, a father, two Brahmin kings, and an eminent man, to make up five, a Brahmin (still) remains sinless" ~Translator.)

This idea in the Dhammapada has evidently been borrowed from the Kauṣītakyupaniṣad. But the Buddhistic writers do not take those words in their literal meaning of matricide or patricide, and have understood mother (mātā) as meaning thirst (tṛṣṇā), and father (pitā) as meaning self-respect (abhimāna). But, in my opinion, these writers have adopted these figurative meanings only because they have not properly understood the principle of Ethics conveyed in this verse. In the Kauṣītakyupaniṣad, before the verse "matṛvadhena pitṛvadhena" etc., it is stated by Indra that; "even if I kill Vṛtra, a Brahmin, I do not thereby commit any sin"; and it is quite clear from this, that actual murder was referred to. The commentary of Max Müller on this verse in his English translation on the Dhammapada (S. B. E., Volume X, pp. 70 and 71) is, according to me, due to misunderstanding.

(perfect disciples) of the Lord" (John. 1.3.9) conveys the same import. Those who have got into the habit of arriving at a decision about morality by merely considering the external Action, without attaching proper importance to mental purity, may consider this doctrine as strange; and some people perversely interpret 'not bound by rules of right or wrong' as meaning 'one who commits any wrong he likes,' and distort the doctrine mentioned above by me as meaning "the Sthitaprajña is at liberty to commit any sin he likes". But, just as the fact that a blind man does not see a pillar, is not the fault of the pillar, so does the fact of these objectors, who have become blind because they support a particular doctrine, not clearly understanding the meaning of the doctrine mentioned above, not become a fault of the doctrine. Even the Gītā accepts the position that the purity of anybody's mind has first to be tested by his external

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actions; and the Metaphysical science does not wish to apply the abovementioned doctrine to those imperfect persons, the purity of whose mind remains to be tested, even a little, by that test. But the case is different with the man who has reached the state of perfection, and whose mind has undoubtedly become entirely merged in the Brahman and infinitely desireless; and although some Action of his might appear improper from the ordinary point of view, yet, as it is

admitted that his mind is perfectly pure and equable, it follows that such Action, however it appears to the ordinary observer, must be essentially sinless; or, it must have been committed for some ethically correct reason, and is not likely to be founded on avarice or immorality like the actions of ordinary people. The same is the reason why Abraham in the Bible was not guilty of the sin of attempting infanticide, though he was about to kill his son; or, why Buddha did not incur the sin of murder, when his father-in-law died as a result of his curse; or, why Paraśurāma was not guilty of matricide though he killed his own mother. And the advice given in the Gītā to Arjuna by the Blessed Lord that, "if your mind is pure and stainless, you will not be guilty of the sin of having killed your ancestor or your preceptor, though you may happen to kill Bhīṣma and Droṇa in warfare, according to the duty of the Kṣatriyas, and without having any hope of any benefit to be derived thereby; because, in such circumstances, you have become merely an instrument for carrying into effect the desire of the Parameśvara" (Gī. 11.33), is based on the same principle. We see in ordinary life that if a millionaire snatches away money from a beggar, the millionaire is not called a thief, but it is believed that the beggar has committed some wrong, and that on that account the millionaire has punished him. This argument applies still more appropriately, or more fully, to the conduct of the Sthitaprajña, the arhata, or the devotee of the Blessed Lord; because, the Reason of the millionaire may on occasion falter, but it is a settled fact that such emotions

cannot touch the Reason of the Sthitaprajña. As the  
Paramēśvara, the Creator of the universe, is untouched by sin  
or merit, notwithstanding that He performs all Actions, so also  
is the state of these saints, who have become merged

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in the Brahman, always holy and sinless. It may even be said  
that laws of conduct are framed on the basis of the Actions  
performed by such persons on previous occasions, of their  
own free will; and on that account, these saints become the  
fathers of those laws of behaviour, and are never the slaves of  
them. Such illustrations are come across not only in the Vedic  
religion, but also in the Buddhistic and Christian, religions; and  
this principle was accepted even by the ancient Greek  
philosophers; and in the present age, Kant [1] has in his book  
on the science of Ethics proved this by conclusive reasons.

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[1] "A perfectly good will would therefore be equally subject to objective laws (viz., laws of good), but could not be conceived as obliged thereby to act lawfully, because of itself from its subjective constitution, it can only be determined by the conception of good. Therefore, no imperatives hold for the Divine will? or in general for a holy will; ought is here out of place, because the volition is already of itself necessarily in unison with the law". Kant's *Metaphysics of Morals*, p. 31. (Abbott's trans, in Kant's *Theory of Ethics*, 6th Ed). Nietzsche does not accept any Metaphysical basis; yet, in the description of a superman given by him in his books, he has said that such a person is beyond good and evil, and one of his books is entitled *Beyond Good and Evil*.

When it has thus been proved what the unpollutable original spring or the stainless model of all rules of Morality is, such persons as want to scrutinise the fundamental principles of Ethics, or of the doctrine of Energism (karma-yoga) must minutely examine the lives of such holy and stainless saints. That is why Arjuna has asked Śrī Kṛṣṇa the following questions in the Bhagavadgītā, namely:— "sthitadhīḥ kiṁ prabhāṣeta kim āsīta vrajeta kim" (Gī. 2.54), i.e., "how does the Sthitaprajña speak, sit, move about?"; or, in the fourteenth chapter, "kair liṅgais trīṇ guṇān etān atīto bhavati prabho, kimācāraḥ" (Gī. 14.21), i.e., "how does a man go beyond the three constituents, (become a triguṇātīta), what is his behaviour, and how is such a man to be recognised?" As an assayer tests the golden ornament, which has been taken to him for examination, by comparing it with a sample piece of hundred carat gold in his possession, so also is the behaviour of the Sthitaprajña a test for deciding

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between the duty and the non-duty, the just and the unjust; and the implied meaning of these questions is that the Blessed Lord should explain to Arjuna what that test was. Some persons say that the descriptions which have been given by the Blessed Lord of the state of the Sthitaprajña or of the Triguṇātīta, in reply to this question, are of Jñānins following the Path of Renunciation, and not the Karma-Yoga; because, it



is with reference to such persons that the adjective 'nirāśrayaḥ' (i.e., homeless ~Translator.), (Gī. 4.20) has been used in the Gītā.; and in the twelfth chapter, where the description of the Sthitaprajña devotees of the Blessed Lord is being given, the words "sarvārambhaparityāgī" (i.e., "one who has abandoned all ārambha or commencement of Action ~Translator.), (Gī. 12.16), and "aniketaḥ" (i.e., "one who has no abode" ~Translator.), (Gī. 12.19), have been used clearly. But the words 'nirāśrayaḥ' or 'aniketaḥ' do not mean 'one who does not remain in a home, but roams about in a forest', and they must be taken as synonymous with "anāśritaḥ karmaphalam" (i.e., "not taking shelter in the Fruit of the Action" ~Translator.), (Gī. 6.1), that is to say, as meaning 'one who does not take shelter in the Fruit of Action', or, 'one, the home of whose mind, is not in that Fruit', as will be clearly seen from my commentaries on the translations of those respective verses. Besides, it is stated in the description itself of the Sthitaprajña, that "he moves about among the objects of pleasure, keeping control over his organs", that is, he performs Actions desirelessly (Gī. 2.64); and, in the stanza which contains the word 'nirāśrayaḥ' occurs also the description, "karmaṇy abhipravṛtto 'pi naiva kiṁcit karoti saḥ", that is, "he is free from and untouched by all Actions, though he performs them". The same argument must be applied to the use of the word 'aniketaḥ' in the twelfth chapter; because, in that chapter, after having praised the abandonment of the Fruit of Action (not the Abandonment of Action), the Blessed

Lord has gone on to describe the characteristics of His devotees, in order to explain what peace (śānti) is obtained by performing Action after abandoning the Hope for Fruit (phalāśā); and in the same way, a description has been given in the eighteenth chapter, of a person who has been merged in the Brahman, in order to explain how peace is obtained by

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performing Actions without being attached to the Fruit of Action (Gī. 18.50). It, therefore, becomes necessary to come to the conclusion that these descriptions are not of persons who follow the Path of Renunciation, but of Karma-yogins. It is not that, the Knowledge of the Brahman, the peace of mind, the Self-identification (ātmaupamya), or the Desirelessness of Mind, of the Karma-yogin Sthitaprajña, is different from those .of the Saṁnyāsin-Sthitaprajña. As both are perfect Knowers of the Brahman, the mental frame and the peace of mind are the same in either case; but the one is merely engrossed in Peace (śānti), and does not care for anything else; whereas, the other is continually bringing into use his peace of mind and his Self-identification in his activities of ordinary life, as occasion arises. This is the important difference between the two from the point of view of Karma. Therefore, that Sthitaprajña, whose personal conduct has to be taken as an example for determining what is right and what is wrong in ordinary life, must be one who performs Action, and not one

who has abandoned Action or is a beggar (bhikṣu). The sum and substance of the advice given to Arjuna in the Gītā is, "it is not necessary to give up Action, nor can you give it up; but. Realise the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman and keep your pure Reason (vyavasāyātmikā buddhi) equable like that of a Karma-yogin, so that your Practical Reason (vāsanātmikā buddhi) will thereby also become pure, mine-less, and saintly, and you will not be caught in the bondage of Karma"; and that is why in explaining to Jājali the principle of Ethics embodied in the stanza quoted at the beginning of this chapter, namely, "that man who, by his Actions and by his speech, is continually engrossed in the welfare of others, and who is always a friend of others, may alone be said to have understood what morality (dharma) is", Tulādhāra has mentioned Karma, side by side with Speech and Mind, and even before mentioning them.

It is not necessary to explain principles of Ethics in detail to that man, whose mind has become equable towards all created things, like that of a Karma-yogin Sthitaprajña or a Jīvanmukta, and all whose selfish interests have been merged in the interests of others. He may be said to have

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become self-enlightened or a 'buddha'. As Arjuna had reached that stage, it was not necessary to give him any advice beyond,

stating: "make your mind equable and steady, and instead of falling in the futile mistake of giving up Action, make your mind similar to that of the Sthitaprajña, and perform all. Action which has befallen you according to your status in life." Yet, as this Yoga in the shape of equability of mind, cannot, as has been stated above, be attained by everyone in- one life, the life of a Sthitaprajña must be a little more minutely examined and explained for the benefit of ordinary people. But, in making this disquisition, one must also bear in mind that the Sthitaprajña, whom we are going to consider, is not a man living in a society which has reached the perfect state of the Kṛta-yuga, but is one who has to live in a society in this Kali-yuga, in which almost all people are steeped in. their own selfish interests. Because, however great and. complete the Knowledge of a man may be, and whatever the state of equability of Mind which he has reached, it will not do if he adopts the practice of harmlessness, kindness, peacefulness, forgiveness etc., which are permanent virtues of the highest order, in dealing with persons whose minds are impure, and who are caught within the toils of Desire, Anger etc. [1] It need

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[1] "In the second place, ideal conduct such as ethical theory is concerned with, is not possible for the ideal man in the midst- of men otherwise constituted. An absolutely just or perfectly sympathetic person could not live and act according to his nature in a tribe of cannibals. Among people who are treacherous and utterly without scruple, entire truthfulness and openness must bring ruin". Spencer's Data of Ethics, Chap. XV, p. 280. Spencer has called this 'Relative Ethics'; and he says that: "On the evolution-hypothesis, the two (Absolute and Relative

not be said that the rules of Right and Wrong, applicable to a society in which the majority is of avaricious persons, must be at least somewhat different from the rules of Right and Wrong and of Absolute.

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Ethics applicable to a society in which every person is a Sthitaprajña; otherwise, saints will have to leave this world, and evil-doers will be the rulers everywhere. This does not mean that saints must give up their equable frame of mind; but there are kinds and kinds of equability of mind. It is stated in the Gītā that the hearts of saints are equal towards "brāhmaṇe gavi hastini" (Gī. 5.18), i.e., "Brahmins, cows, and elephants". But if, on that account, someone feeds a Brahmin with the grass which has been brought for the cow or feeds the cow with the food which has been cooked for the Brahmin, shall we call him a wise man? If persons following the School of Renunciation do not attach any importance to this question, the same cannot be done by people who follow the Karma-Yoga. The Sthitaprajña lives his life in this world, taking into account what the nature of Right and Wrong was in the perfect state of the Kṛta-yuga, and deciding what changes are

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Ethics) presuppose one another; and only when they co-exist, can there exist that ideal conduct which Absolute Ethics has to formulate, and which Relative Ethics has to take as the standard by which to ultimate divergencies from right, or degrees of wrong".

necessary in those rules, in this world of selfish persons, having regard to the difference of Time and Place; and it will be clear from what has been stated in the second chapter above, that this is the most difficult question in Karma-Yoga. Saints perform their duties in this life apathetically, and only for the benefit of such selfish people, instead of getting angry with them, or allowing their own equability of mind to change on account of their avaricious tendencies. Bearing this principle in mind, Śrī Samartha Rāmadāsa has, after having in the first part of the Dāsabodha dealt with the Knowledge of the Brahman, started in the eleventh chapter a description of the activities performed by such Sthitaprajñas or saints for social welfare, with indifference to the world, or desirelessly, and with the intention of instilling wisdom into such people (Dāsa. 11.10; 12.8 – 10; 15.2); and he has stated later on in the eighteenth chapter, that one should thoroughly understand and grasp the traditions, stories, stratagems, devices, circumstances, intentness of pursuit, inferences, cleverness, diplomacy, forbearance, acuteness, generosity, Metaphysical Knowledge, devotion, aloofness, indifference to the world, daringness, assiduity, determination, firmness, equability, discrimination, and numerous other qualities of such Jñānins (Dāsa, 18. 2). But

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as such disinterested persons have to deal with avaricious persons, the ultimate advice of Śrī Samartha is:-

Meet baldness with boldness;  
impertinence by impertinence;  
villainy by villainy;  
must be met (Dāsa. 19.9.30)

In short, when a man descends from the state of perfection to ordinary life, it is undoubtedly necessary to make some changes in the rules of Right or Wrong which apply to the highest state.

To this position, Materialistic philosophers raise the following objection, namely: if, when one descends from the perfect state into ordinary society, one has to deal with many things with discrimination, and modify Absolute Ethics to a certain extent, where is the permanence of Ethical principles, and what becomes of the axiom "dharmo nityaḥ", i.e., "Morality is immutable," which has been enunciated by Vyāsa in the Bhārata-Sāvitṛī? They say that the immutability of Ethics from the point of view of Metaphysics is purely imaginary, and that those are the only true rules of Ethics, which come into existence consistently with the state of society at particular periods of time, on the basis of the principle of the 'greatest good of the greatest number'. But, this argument is not correct. Just as the scientific definition of a straight line or of a perfect circle does not become faulty or purposeless, because no one can draw a straight line without breadth or a faultless circumference of a circle as defined in Geometry, so also is the case with simple and pure rules of Ethics. Besides, unless one

has determined the absolutely pure form of anything, it is not possible to bring about improvements in the various imperfect forms of it which we come across in life, or to ascertain the relative worth of the various forms after careful consideration; and that is why the assayer first decides what is pure hundred carat gold. Persons who live only according to the times, and without taking into account the absolute form of Ethical principles, will be in the same position as sailors on a ship, who guide the rudder on the boundless ocean, considering only the waves and the wind, and without taking into account the compass, which shows the

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cardinal directions, or the Polar star. Therefore, even considering everything from the Materialistic point of view, it is necessary to first fix some principle of Ethics, which is- unchangeable and permanent like the Polar star; and once this necessity has been admitted, the entire Materialistic argument falls to the ground. Because, as all enjoyment of objects of pleasure which causes pain or happiness falls into the Name-d, and Form-ed, and therefore, the non-permanent or perishable category of illusory objects, no principle of Ethics based on such enjoyment, that is, on merely external effects, can be permanent- Such Ethical principles must go on changing as the ideas of the material, external, pain and happiness on which they are based, change. Therefore, if one has to escape from,



this perpetually changing state of Ethics, one must not take into account the enjoyment of objects of pleasure in this illusory world, but must stand on the sole Metaphysical foundation of the principle, "there is only one Ātman in all created things"; because, as has been stated before in the ninth chapter, there is nothing in this world which is permanent except the Ātman; and the same is the meaning conveyed by the statement of Vyāsa: "dharmo nityaḥ sukhaduḥkhe tv anitye", i.e., "the rules of Ethics or of pure behaviour are immutable, and happiness and unhappiness are transient and mutable". It is true that in a society which is full of cruel and avaricious persons, it is not possible to fully observe- the immutable Ethical laws of harmlessness, truth, etc.; but one cannot blame these Ethical laws for that. Just as one cannot, from the fact that the shade of an object cast by the Sun's rays is flat on a flat surface, but is undulating on an undulating surface, draw the inference that the shade must be originally undulating, so can one not, from the fact that one does not come across the purest form of Ethics in a society of unprincipled persons, draw the inference that the imperfect state of Ethics which we come across in an imperfect society is the principal or the original form of Ethics. The fault here is not of Ethics, but of the society; therefore, those who are wise, do not quarrel with pure and permanent laws of Ethics but apply their efforts towards elevating society, so as to- bring it to the ultimate highest state. Although our

philosophers have mentioned some exceptions to the permanent laws of Ethics in dealing with avaricious persons in society, as being unavoidable, they also mention penances for acting according to such exceptions; and this will also dearly explain the difference pointed out by me in previous chapters in explaining to my readers that Western Materialistic Ethical science bare-facedly supports and propounds these exceptions as laws, and by confusion of thought, looks upon the principles of discrimination between external results, which are useful only for fixing these exceptions, as the true laws of Ethics.

I have thus explained that the true foundation of Ethics is the frame of mind and the mode of life of the Sthitaprajña Jñānin (the Steady-in-Mind scient); and why, although the laws of Ethics to be deduced from the same are permanent and immutable in themselves, they have got to be varied in an imperfect state of society; and, how and why the immutability of fundamental laws of Ethics is not affected, though these laws may be varied in that way. I shall now consider the question first mentioned by me, namely, what is the hidden significance or fundamental principle underlying the behaviour of a Sthitaprajña Jñānin in an imperfect society. I have stated before in the fourth chapter that this question can be considered in two ways: the one way is to consider the state of mind of the doer as the principal factor; and the other way is

to consider his external mode of life. If one considers the matter only from the second point of view, it will be seen that all the activities of the Sthitaprajña are prima facie for the benefit of the world. It is stated in two places in the Gītā that, saints who have acquired the highest Knowledge, are "engrossed in bringing about the welfare of all created things", that is, they are "sarvabhūtahite ratāḥ" (Gī. 5.25 and 12.4); and the same statement also appears in various places in the Mahābhārata. I have stated above that the laws of harmlessness etc., which are followed by Sthitaprajña Jñānins, are in fact 'dharma', or the model of pure behaviour. In explaining the necessity of these rules of harmlessness etc., and in describing the nature of these laws of Ethics (dharma), the Mahābhārata contains various statements explaining their

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asternal usefulness, such as:— "ahiṃsā satyavacanam sarvabhūtahitam param" (Vana. 206. 73), i.e., "non-violence and truthfulness are laws of Ethics, beneficial to everybody"; or, "dhāraṇād dharmam ity āhuḥ" (Śān. 109.12), i.e., "it is called dharma, because it maintains the world"; or, "dharmam hi śreya ity āhuḥ" (Anu. 105.14), i.e., "that is dharma, which is beneficial"; or, "prabhavārthāya bhūtanām dharmapravacanam kṛtam" (Śān. 109.10), i.e., "laws of Ethics have been made for the amelioration of society"; or, "loka-yātrārtham evehaṃ dharmasya niyamaḥ kṛta ubhayatra

sukhodarkaḥ" (Śān. 258. 4), I.e., "laws of Ethics have been made in order that the activities of society should go on, and that benefit should be acquired in this life and the next". In the same way, it is stated that, when there is a doubt between what is right and what is wrong, the Jñānin –

lokayātrā ca draṣṭavyā dharmāś cātmahitāni ca | (Anu. 37.16; Vana. 206.90)

that is, "should discriminate between external factors like the usual activities of men, laws of Ethics, and one's own benefit", and decide what is to be done; and the king Śibi has, in the Vanaparva, followed the same principle for discriminating between right and wrong (Vana. 131.11 and 12). From these statements, it will be clearly seen that the 'external guiding factor' of the mode of life of a Sthitaprajña, is the advancement of society; and if this is accepted as correct, the next question which faces us is: why do Metaphysicians not accept the Materialistic Ethical law of 'the greatest happiness or, (using the word 'happiness' in a more extensive meaning), benefit, or advantage of the greatest number'? I have shown above in the fourth chapter that the one great drawback of the principle of the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number' is, that it does not provide for either, the happiness or amelioration resulting from Self-Realisation, or the happiness in the next world. But this drawback can to a great extent be removed by taking the word 'happiness' in a comprehensive meaning; and the Metaphysical argument given above in support of the immutability of Ethical laws, will, therefore, not

appear of importance to many. It is, therefore, necessary to again give a further elucidation

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of the important difference between the Metaphysical and the Materialistic aspect of Ethics.

The question whether a particular act is ethically proper or improper can be considered in two ways: (1) by considering merely its external result, that is to say, its visible effect on the world; and (2) by considering the Reason or the Desire- of the doer. The first method of consideration is known as the MATERIALISTIC (*ādhibhautika*) method. In the second method, there are again two sub-divisions, each of which has a different name. I have in the previous chapters referred, to the doctrines that (i) in order that one's Action should be pure, one's Practical Reason has got to be pure, and that (ii) in order that one's Practical Reason should be pure, one's Pure Reason, that is, the reasoning faculty, which discriminates between what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, has got to be steady, equable, and pure. According to these doctrines, one has to see whether the Practical Reason which prompted a particular action was or was not pure, in order to determine whether the Action is pure; and when one wishes to consider whether the Practical Reason was or was not pure, one has

necessarily to see whether the Deciding Reason was or was not pure. In short, whether the Reason or the Desire of the doer was or was not pure, has ultimately to be judged by considering the purity or the impurity of the Deciding Reason (Gī. 2.41). When this Deciding Reason is considered to be an independent deity, embodying the power of discrimination between Right and Wrong (sadasadvivecana-śakti), that method of consideration is called the INTOTITIONIST' (ādhidaivata) method; but if one believes that this power is not an independent deity, but is an eternal organ of the Ātman, and on that account, one looks upon the Ātman, instead of the Reason, as the principal factor and determines the pureness of Desire on that basis, that method of determining principles of Ethics is known as the METAPHYSICAL (ādhyātmika) method. Our philosophers say that this Metaphysical method is the best of all these methods; and although the well-known German philosopher Kant has not clearly enunciated the doctrine of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, he has commenced his disquisition of the principles of

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Ethics, with a consideration of Pure Reason, that is, in a way; from the Metaphysical point of view; and he has clearly stated

there his reasons for doing so. [1] Green is of the same opinion: but these matters cannot be dealt with in detail in a small book like this. I have, in the fourth chapter above, explained by giving a few illustrations why, in finally deciding questions of Ethics, one has to pay more special attention to the pureness of the Reason of the doer, than to the external result of his Actions; and this subject-matter will be further considered in the fifteenth chapter when I will compare the Western and the Eastern ethical laws. For the time being, I will only say that, in as much as it is necessary that there should be a desire to perform any particular Action before it is actually performed, the consideration of the propriety or the impropriety of such Action, depends entirely on the consideration of the purity or the impurity of the Reason. If the Reason is sinful, the Action will be sinful; but, from the fact that the external Action is bad, one cannot draw the conclusion that the Reason, also must be bad; because, that act may have been performed by mistake, or as a result of a misunderstanding, or as a result of ignorance; and in these cases it cannot be said to be ethically sinful. The Ethical principle of 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' can apply only to the external results of Actions; and as no one has so far invented any external means for definitely measuring the external results of such Actions in the shape of pain or happiness, it is not certain that this test of Morality will

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[1] See Kant's Theory of Ethics trans, by Abbott, 6th Ed., especially Metaphysics of Morals therein.

always give us a correct result. In the same way, however wise a man may be, if his Reason is not pure, it is not certain that he will on every occasion behave in a morally correct way. And the position will be much worse if Mb own selfish interests are in any way affected in that matter; because, "svārthe sarve vimuhyanti ye 'pi dharmavido janāḥ" (Ma. Bhā. Vi. 51. 4), i.e., "all are blinded by selfish interests, even if they are well-versed in Morality" ~Translator.). In short, however much a man may be a Jñānin, or well-versed in Morality, or wise, if his

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Reason has not become equable towards all created beings, it is not certain that his Actions will always be pure or morally faultless. Therefore, our philosophers have decided definitely that in dealing with ethical problems, one must consider principally the Reason of the doer, rather than the external results of his Actions; and that equability of Reason is the true principle underlying an ethically correct mode of life. And the Blessed Lord has given to Arjuna the following advice on the same principle in the Bhagavadgītā:

dūreṇa hy avaram karma buddhiyogād dhanañjaya ।



buddhau śaraṇam anviccha kṛpaṇāḥ phalahetavaḥ ||  
[1] (Gī. 2.49).

Some say that the word 'buddhi' in this stanza is to be understood as meaning 'Jñāna' (Knowledge), and that a higher place has been given to Jñāna, as between Jñāna and Karma. But, according to me, this interpretation is incorrect. Even in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya on this stanza, the word 'buddhi-yoga' has been interpreted as meaning 'samatva-buddhi-yoga' (the Yoga of equability of Reason); and further, this stanza occurs in that part of the Gītā which deals with the Karma-Yoga. Therefore, this stanza must be interpreted with reference to Karma only; and such an interpretation is also naturally arrived at. Those who perform Actions fall into the two categories of (i) those who keep an eye merely on the fruit – for example, on the question, how many persons will be benefited thereby, and to what extent; and (ii) those who keep then- Reason equable and desireless, and remain unconcerned as to the Fruit of the Action, which (fruit) results from the combination of Action (karma) and Destiny (dharma). Out of these, this stanza has treated the 'phalahetavaḥ', that is, 'those who perform Action, keeping an eye on the result of the Action', as kṛpaṇa,

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[1] The literal meaning of this verse is:– Dhanañjaya! (pure) Action is very much inferior to the Yoga of the (equable) Reason; (therefore), rely on (the equable) Reason. Those (persons), who perform Actions keeping an eye to the Fruit of Action, are 'kṛpaṇa', that is, of an inferior order".

that is, of a lower order from the ethical point of view; and those who perform Action with an equable Reason as superior. That is what is meant by the statement in the first two parts of the stanza, namely, "dūreṇa hy avaraṁ karma buddhiyogād dhanañjaya", i.e., "O Dhanañjaya, Action alone is very much inferior to the Yoga of the equable Reason"; and that is the answer given by the Blessed Lord to the question of Arjuna "How shall I kill Bhīṣma, Droṇa and others?" The implied meaning of this is, that one has to consider not merely the Action of dying or of killing, but the motive with which that Action has been performed; and therefore, the advice has been given in the third part of the stanza that: "Rely on your Reason (buddhi), that is, on the equable Reason (sama-buddhi)"; and later on, in the summing up in the eighteenth chapter, the Blessed Lord has again said:— "Perform all your Actions, relying on the Yoga of the equable Reason". That the Gītā, looks upon the consideration of the Action itself as inferior, and of the motive which inspires the particular Action as superior, will be apparent from another stanza in the Gītā. In the eighteenth chapter, Karma has been classified into sāttvika, rājasa, and tāmasa . If the Gītā had intended to consider only the result of the Action, the Blessed Lord would have said that those Actions, which produce the greatest good of the greatest number, are sāttvika; but, instead of doing so, it is stated in the eighteenth chapter that, "that Action is the

most excellent, which has been performed desirelessly, that is, after abandoning the Hope for the Fruit of the Action" (Gī. 18.23). Therefore, the Gītā, in discriminating between the doable and the not- doable, attaches a higher importance to the desireless, equable, and unattached Reason of the doer, than to the external result of the Action; and if the same test is applied to the conduct of the Sthitaprajña, it follows that the true principle involved in the mode of life of a Sthitaprajña is the equable Reason with which he behaves towards his equals and his subordinates; and that the welfare of all created beings resulting from such a mode of life is the external or concomitant result of that equability of Reason. In the same way, it is improbable that the man whose Reason has reached the perfectly equable state, will perform Action with the sole idea of giving merely

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Material happiness to other people. It is true that he will not causa harm to others. But, that cannot be considered to be his principal ideal; and all the activities of a Sthitaprajña are directed towards more and more purifying the minds of all the persons forming a society, and thereby enabling such persons- to ultimately reach the Metaphysically perfect state he himself has reached. This is the highest and the most sāttvika duty of mankind. We look upon all efforts directed merely towards the

increase of the Material happiness of human beings as inferior or rājasa.

To the doctrine of the Gītā that in order to decide between the doable and the not-doable, one has to attach a higher importance to the pureness of the motive of the doer than to the result of the Action, the following mischievous objection has been raised, namely, if one does not take into account the result of the Action, but merely considers the pureness of the motive, it will follow that a person with a pure Reason can commit any crime he likes; and that he will then be at liberty to perform all sorts of crimes! This objection has not been imagined by me, but I have as a matter of fact seen objections of this kind which have been advanced against the Gītā religion by some Christian missionaries. [1] But, I do not feel the slightest compunction in characterising these allegations or objections as totally foolish and perverse. Nay, I may even go so far as to say that these missionaries have become as incapable of even understanding the Metaphysical perfection of the Sthitaprajña described in the Vedic religion on account of an over-weening admiration for their own religion, or of some other nefarious or evil emotions, as a black-as-ebony Negro from Africa is unfit for or incapable of appreciating the principles of Ethics accepted in civilised countries. Kant, the

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[1] One missionary from Calcutta has made this statement; and the reply given to it by Mr. Brooks appears at the end of his treatise Kurukṣetra (Kurukṣetra, Vyāsāśrama, Adyar, Madras, pp. 48.52).

well-known German philosopher of the nineteenth century, has stated in several places in his book on Ethics, that one must consider only the Reason of the doer, rather than the external result.

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of his Action, in deciding questions of Ethics. [1] But, I have nowhere come across any such objection having been raised to that statement of Kant. Then how can such an objection apply to the principle of Ethics enunciated by the Gītā? When the Reason has become equable towards all created beings, charity becomes a matter of inherent nature; and therefore, it is as impossible that a person who has acquired this highest Knowledge, and is possessed of the purest Reason, should commit sin, as that nectar should cause death. When the Gītā says that one should not consider the external result of the Action, that does not mean that one is at liberty to do what

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[1] "The second proposition is: That an action done from duty derives its moral worth, not from the purpose which is to be attained by it, but from the maxim by which it is determined". The moral worth of action "cannot lie anywhere but in the principle of the will, without regard to the ends which can be attained by action". Kant's *Metaphysic of Morals* (trans. by Abbott in Kant's *Theory of Ethics*, p. 16. The italics are the author's and not our own). And again, "When the question is of moral worth, it is not with' the actions which we see that we are concerned, but with those inward principles of them which we do not see", p. 24. Ibid.

one likes. The Gītā says: though a person can hypocritically or with a selfish motive, appear to be charitable, he cannot hypocritically possess that equability of Reason and stability, which can arise only by Realising that there is but one Ātman in all created beings; therefore, in considering the propriety or the impropriety of any Action, one has to give due consideration to the Reason of the doer, instead of considering only the external results of his Action. To express the matter in short, the doctrine of the Gītā is that Morality does not consist of Material Action only, but that it wholly depends on the Reason of the doer; and the Gītā says later on (Gī. 18.25), that if a man, not realising the true principle underlying this doctrine, starts doing whatever he likes, he must be said to be tāmasa or a devil. Once the mind has become equable, it is not necessary to give the man any further advice about the propriety or the impropriety of Actions. Bearing this principle in mind, Saint Tukārāma has

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preached to Shivaji Maharaja the sole doctrine of Karma-Yoga, same as the Bhagavadgītā, in the abhaṅga:—

"This has only one merit-producing meaning  
there is only one Ātman, that is, God in all created  
beings. (Tu. Gā. 4428.9).

But, although the essential basis of proper conduct (sadācaraṇa) is the equable Season, I must repeat here that, one cannot from that fact draw the inference that the man who performs Action, must wait for performing Action until his Reason has reached that stage. It is the highest ideal of everybody to make his mind like that of a Sthitaprajña. But it is stated already in the commencement of the Gītā, that because this is the highest ideal, one need not wait for performing Action until that ideal has been reached; that one should in the meantime perform all Actions with as much unselfishness as possible, so that thereby the Reason will become purer and purer, and the highest state of perfection will ultimately be reached; and that one must not waste time by insisting on not performing any Action until the perfect state of the Reason, has been reached (Gī. 2.40).

A further objection is raised by many that, although it has in this way been proved (i) that the ethical principle of 'sarva-bhūta-hita' or of the greatest good of the greatest number ' is a one-sided and superficial (śākhāgrāhī) principle, as it applies, only to external Actions, and (ii) that the 'equability of Reason' according to which 'there is only one Ātman in all created beings' is a thing which goes to the root of the matter (is mulāgrāhī), and must, therefore, be considered as of higher importance in determining questions of Morality, yet, one does not thereby get a clear idea as to how one should behave in ordinary life. These objections have suggested themselves to

the objectors principally by seeing the worldly behaviour of Sthitaprajñas, who follow the Path of Renunciation. But anybody will see after a little thought, that they cannot apply to the mode of life of the Karma-yogin Sthitaprajña. Nay; we may even say that no ethical principle can more satisfactorily justify worldly morality, than the principle of considering

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that there is only one Ātman in all created beings, or of Self-identification (ātmaupamya). For example, let us take the doctrine of charity, which has been given an important place in all countries and according to all codes of Ethics. This doctrine can be Justified by no Materialistic principle, as satisfactorily as by the Metaphysical principle that ' the Ātman of the other man is the same as my Ātman \*'. The utmost that Materialistic philosophy can tell us is, that philanthropy is an inherent quality which gradually grows, according to the Theory of Evolution (utkrānti-vāda). But not only is the immutability of the principle of philanthropy not established by that philosophy, but, as has been shown by me before in the fourth chapter, when a man is faced with a conflict between his own interests and the interests of others, the 'enlightened selfish', who would like to sit on two stools, thereby get a chance of justifying their own attitude. But even to this, an objection is raised by some, that it is no use proving the immutability of the principle of philanthropy. If everyone tries to serve the



interests of others believing that there is only one Ātman in all created beings, who is going to look after his interests; and if in this way, his own interests are not looked after, how will he be in a position to do good to others? But these objections are neither new, nor unconquerable. The Blessed Lord has answered this very question in the Bhagavadgītā on the basis of the Path of Devotion, by saying; "teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānāṁ yogakṣemaṁ vahāmy aham" (Gī. 9.22), (i.e., "I look after the maintenance and welfare of those persons, who are permanently steeped in Yoga" ~Translator.); and the same conclusion follows on the Metaphysical basis. That man, who, is inspired with the desire of achieving the benefit of others, has not necessarily to give up food and drink; but he must believe that he is maintaining and keeping alive his own body for the benefit of others. Janaka has said (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 32) that the organs will remain under one's control, only if one's Reason is in that state, and the doctrine of the Mīmāṃsā school that, 'that man is said to be amṛtāśī, who eats the food which has remained over after the performance of the sacrificial offering', is based on the same idea (Gī. 4.31). Because, as the

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Yajña is, from their point of view, an Action for the maintenance and conduct of the world, they have come to the conclusion, that one maintains oneself and should maintain

oneself, while performing that act of public benefit; and that, it is not proper to put an end to the cycle of Yajñas for one's own selfish interest. Even according to the ordinary worldly outlook, one sees the appropriateness of the statement made by Śrī Samarthā Rāmadāsa in the Dāsabodha that:—

That man is continually achieving the good of others;

That man is always wanted by everybody;

Then what can he need I in this world? (Dāsa. 19.4.10).

In short, it never happens that the man, who toils for public welfare, is found to suffer for want of being maintained. A man must only become ready to achieve the good of others with a desireless frame of Reason. When once the idea, that all persons are in him and that he is in all persons, has been fixed in a person's mind, the question whether self-interest is distinct from the interest of others, does not arise at all. The above-mentioned foolish doubts arise only in the minds of those persons who start to achieve 'the greatest good of the greatest number', with the Materialistic dual feeling that 'I' am different from 'others'. But, the man who starts to achieve the good of others with the Monistic idea that "sarvaṁ khalv idaṁ brahma" (i.e., "all this which exists is the Brahman" ~Translator.), is never assailed by any such doubts. This important difference between the Metaphysical principle of achieving the welfare of all created beings, on the basis that there is only one Ātman in all created beings, and the Materialistic principle of general welfare, arising from a discrimination between the duality of self-interest and others-

interest, or from the consideration of the good of the multitude, has got to be carefully borne in mind. Saints do not achieve public welfare with the idea of achieving public welfare. Just as giving light is the inherent quality of the Sun, so does achieving the good of others become the inherent quality of these saints, as a result of the complete realisation of the unity of the Ātman in all

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created things; and when this has become the inherent quality of a saint, then, just as the Sun in giving light to others also gives light to itself, so also is the maintenance of such a saint achieved automatically by the activities directed by him towards the interests of others. When this inherent tendency of doing good to others is coupled with an unattached Reason, saints, who have realised the identity of the Ātman and the Brahman, continue their beneficent activities, without caring for the opposition they come across, and without trying to discriminate between whether it is better to suffer adversity or to give up public welfare; and if occasion arises, they are even ready to and indifferent about sacrificing their own lives. But, those who distinguish between self-interest and other's-interest, and begin to discriminate between what is right and what is wrong by seeing which way the scale turns when they weigh self-interest against other's-interest, can never experience a desire for public welfare, which is as intense as

that of such saints. Therefore although the principle of the benefit of all created beings is acceptable to the Gītā, it does not justify that principle by the consideration of the greatest external good of the greatest number, but looks upon the consideration of whether the numbers are large or small, or the consideration of the large or small quantity of happiness, as short-sighted and irrelevant; and it justifies the equability of Reason, which is the root of pure conduct, on the basis of the eternal Realisation of the Brahman which is propounded by Metaphysical philosophy.

From this it will be seen how a logically correct justification of one's making efforts for the benefit of others or of universal welfare, or of charity, can be arrived at from the point of view of Metaphysics. I will now consider the fundamental principles, which have been enunciated in our Śāstras for guiding the behaviour of one person towards another in society, from the point of view of equability of Reason. The principle that "yatra vā asya sarvam ātmaivābhūt" (Bṛ. 2.4.14), i.e., "the man for whom everything has been merged in the Self (Ātman)", behaves towards others with a perfectly equable mind, has been enunciated in the Īśāvāsyā

(Īśā. 6) and Kaivalya (Kai. 1.10) Upaniṣads, in addition to the Bṛhadāraṇyaka, as also in the Manu-Smṛti (Manu. 12.91 and 125); and this same principle has been literally enunciated in the sixth chapter of the Gītā, in the words "sarvabhūtastham ātmānam sarvabhūtāni cātmani" (Gī. 6.29), (i.e., "he sees himself in all created things, and all created things in himself" ~Translator.). The Self-identifying (ātmaupamya) outlook is only another form of this principle of believing in the unity of 5.tman in all created things, or of the equability of Reason. Because, if I am in all created things, and all created things are in me, it naturally follows that I must behave towards all created things, in the same, way as I would behave towards myself; and, therefore, the Blessed Lord has told Arjuna, that that man must be looked upon as the most excellent Karma-yogin Sthitaprajña, who "behaves towards all others with equability, that is, with the feeling that his Ātman is the same as the Ātman of others"; and he has advised Arjuna to act accordingly (GH. 6. 30 – 32). As Arjuna was duly initiated, it was not necessary to further labour this principle in the Gītā. But, Vyāsa has very clearly shown the deep and comprehensive meaning embodied in this principle, by enunciating it in numerous places in the Mahābhārata, which has been written in order to teach Religion and Morality to ordinary people (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 238.21; 261.36). For example, in the conversation between Bṛhaspati and Yudhiṣṭhira in the Mahābhārata, this same principle of identifying one's Ātman with others, which has been succinctly mentioned in the.

Upaniṣads and in the Gītā, has at first been mentioned in the following words:—

ātmopamas tu bhūteṣu yo vai bhavati pūruṣaḥ ।  
nyastadaṇḍo jitakrodhaḥ sa pretya sukham edhate ॥  
(Ma. Bhā. Anu. 113.6)

that is, "that man, who looks upon others in the same way as he looks upon himself, and who has conquered anger, obtains happiness in the next world"; and then, without

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completing there the description of how one person should behave towards others, the Mahābhārata goes on to say:—

na tat parasya sandadhyāt pratikulaṁ yad ātmanaḥ ।  
eṣa saṁkṣepato dharmāḥ kāmād anyaḥ pravartate ॥  
(Ma. Bhā. Anu. 113. 8)

that is, "one should not behave towards others in a way which one considers adverse or painful to oneself; this is the essence of all religion and morality, and all other activities are based on selfish interests"; and it lastly says:—

pratyākhyāne ca dāne ca sukhaduḥkhe priyāpriye ।  
ātmaupamyena pūruṣaḥ pramāṇam adhigacchati ॥

yathāparaḥ prakramate pareṣu tathā pare prakramante  
'parasmin |  
tathaiva teṣūpamā jīvaloke yathā dharmo  
nipuṇenopadiṣṭaḥ || (Anu. 113.9 and 10).

that is, "in the matter of pain and happiness, the palatable or the unpalatable, charity or opposition, each man should decide as to what should be done to others, by considering what his own feelings in the matter would be. Others behave towards one, as one behaves towards others; therefore, wise persons have stated, by taking that illustration, that dharma means behaving in the world, by placing oneself in the position of others". The line "na tat parasya sandadhyāt pratikulam yad ātmanah", (i.e., "one should not behave towards others, in a way which one considers adverse or painful to oneself" ~Translator.) has also appeared in the Viduranīti (Udyo. 38.72); and later on, in the Śānti-parva, Vidura has explained the same principle again to Yudhiṣṭhira (Śān. 167.9). But, "do not cause pain to others, because that which is painful to yourself is also painful to others ", is only one part of the doctrine of Self-identification; and some people are likely to be assailed- by the doubt that, we cannot deduce from this doctrine the definite inference that: "as that which is pleasant to yourself will also be pleasant to others, therefore, behave in such a way that pleasure will be caused to others ". Therefore, Bhīṣma in,

explaining the nature of dharma (Morality) to Yudhiṣṭhira has gone further and clearly indicated both the aspects of this law in the following words:—

yad anyair vihitam necched ātmanaḥ karma pūruṣaḥ |  
na tat pareṣu kurvīta jānann apriyam ātmanaḥ ||  
jīvitam yah svayam cecchet katham so 'nyam  
praghātayet |

yad yad ātmani ceccheta tat parasyāpi cintayet || (Śān.  
258.19, 21)

that is, "one should not behave towards others in that way in which one, by considering one's own happiness, desires that others should not behave towards one. How can that man, who desires to live himself, kill others? One should always desire that others should also get what one oneself wants". And in mentioning the same rule in another place, Vidura has, without using the adjectives 'anukūla' (favourable) and 'pratikūla' (unfavourable), laid down a general rule, with reference to every kind of behaviour, in the words:-

tasmād dharmapradhānena bhavitavyam yat ātmanā |  
tathā ca sarvabhūteṣu vartitavyam yathātmani || (Śān.  
167.9)



that is, "control your organs, and behave righteously; and behave towards all created beings, as if they are yourself", because, as Vyāsa says in the Śukānupraśna,

yāvān ātmani vedātmā tāvān ātma parātmani |  
ya evaṁ satataṁ veda so 'mṛtatvāya kalpate || (Ma.  
Bhā. Śān. 238.22)

that is, "there is in the bodies of others, just as much of Ātman as there is in one's own body. That man who continually realises this principle, comes to attain Release". Buddha did not accept the existence of the Ātman; at any rate, he has clearly stated that one should not unnecessarily bother about the consideration of the Ātman. Nevertheless, in teaching

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how Buddhist mendicants should behave towards others, even Buddha has preached the doctrine of Self-identification (ātmaupamyā) in the following words:—

yathā ahaṁ tathā ete yathā ete tathā ahaṁ |  
attānaṁ (ātmānaṁ) upamaṁ katvā (kṛtvā) na haneyya  
m ghātaye ||

(Suttanipāta, Nālakasutta, 27)

that is, "as I am, so are they; as they are, so am I; taking (thus) an illustration from oneself, one should not kill or cause (the) death (of anybody)". Even in another Pāli treatise called

Dhammapada, the second part of the above stanza has appeared twice verbatim; and immediately thereafter, the stanzas occurring both in the Manu-Smṛti (5.45) and Mahābhārata (Anu. 113.5) have been repeated in the Pali language in the following words:—

sukhakāmāni bhūtāni yo daṇḍena vihiṃsati |  
attano sukhamesāno (icchan) pecya so na labhate  
sukham || (Dhammapada. 131)

that is, "that man, who for his own (attano) benefit, kills with-  
a rod other persons, who also desire happiness (like himself),  
does not obtain any happiness after death" (pecya = pretya).  
As we see that the principle of Self-identification is recognised  
in Buddhistic works, although they do not admit of the  
existence of the Ātman, it becomes quite clear that these ideas  
have been taken by Buddhist writers from Vedic texts. But this  
matter will be further considered later on. The above  
quotations will clearly show that even from ancient times, we  
Indians have believed that that man, whose state of mind is  
"sarvabhūtastham ātmānaṃ sarvabhūtāni cātmani" (i.e., "all  
created things are in me, and I am in all created things"  
~Translator.), always conducts himself in life by identifying  
others with himself; and that that is the important principle  
underlying such conduct. Anyone will admit that this principle  
or canon (sūtra) of Self- identification used in deciding how to  
behave with other persons in society, is more logical, faultless,  
unambiguous, comprehensive, and easy than the Materialistic

doctrine of the 'greatest good of the greatest number'; and is such as will easily

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"be grasped by even the most ignorant of persons. [1] This fundamental principle or mystic import of the philosophy of Right and Wrong (eṣa saṁkṣepato dharmah) is justified in a more satisfactory way from the Metaphysical point of view than from the Materialistic point of view, which takes into account only the external effects of Actions; and therefore, the works of Western philosophers, who consider the question of Karma-Yoga merely from the Materialistic point of view, do not give a prominent place to this important doctrine of the philosophy of Right and Wrong. Nay, they attempt to explain the bond of society on merely external principles like the 'greatest happiness of the greatest number' etc., without taking into consideration this canon (sūtra) of the principle of Self-identification. But, it will be seen that this easy ethical principle of Self-identification has been given the highest place

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[1] The word 'sūtra' is defined as "alpākṣaram asaṁdigdham sāravad viśvatomukham | astobham anavadyam ca sūtram sūtravido viduḥ". Those various meaningless letters which are added in a mantra for the purpose of convenience of recitation, without adding to the meaning, are called 'stobhākṣara' (complementary words). There are no such meaningless words in a sūtra, and therefore, the adjective 'astobham' has been used in the definition above

not only in the Upaniṣads, the Manu-Smṛti, the Gītā, the other chapters of the Mahābhārata, and the Buddhistic religion, but also in other countries and in other religions. The commandment "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Levi. 19.15; Matthew, 23.39), to be found in Christian and Jewish religious texts, is nothing but this rule in another form. Christians look upon this as a golden rule, that is to say, as a rule as valuable as gold; but their religion does not explain it by the principle of the unity of the Ātman. The advice of Christ that, "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Matthew 7.12; Luke 6.31) is only a part of the sutra of Self-identification; and the Greek philosopher Aristotle has literally enunciated this same principle of behaviour for men. Aristotle lived about 300 years before Christ, but the Chinese philosopher Khūn-Phū-Tse (corrupted in English into 'Confucius') lived 200 years before

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Aristotle, and he has enunciated the above rule of Self-identification by a single word according to the practice of the Chinese language. But, this principle was enunciated in our country, long before Confucius, in the Upaniṣads (Īśā. 6; Kena. 13); and later on in the Bhārata, and the Gītā; and also in the works of Maratha saints by such words as: "like unto oneself; one should consider others" (Dāsa. 12. 10. 22): and here is also a proverb in Marathi which means, 'one should judge the

world by one's own standard'. Not only is this so, but it has been Metaphysically explained by our ancient philosophers. When one realises that (i) religions other than the Vedic religion have not logically justified this generally accepted canon, though they have mentioned it, and (ii) that this canon cannot be logically justified in any way except by the Metaphysical principle of the identification of the Brahman with the Ātman, one will clearly see the importance of the Metaphysical Ethics preached in the Gītā, or the Karma-Yoga. This easy principle of 'Self-identification', (ātmaupamya) which regulates the mutual behaviour of persons living in a society, is so comprehensive, so easy to understand, and so universally accepted, that when once one lays down the rule: "Realise the identity of the Ātman in all created beings, and behave towards others with an equable frame of mind, as if they are yourself", it is no more necessary to lay down such individual commandments as: be kind to others; help others as much as possible; bring about their welfare; put them on the path of advancement; love them; do not get tired of them; do not hurt their feelings; behave towards them with justice and equality; do not deceive any one; do not deprive any one of his wealth or of his life; do not tell anyone an untruth; bear always in mind the idea of bringing about the greatest good of the greatest number; behave towards all, looking upon them as the children of one and the same father, and as if they were your brothers etc. Everybody soever naturally understands in what his happiness or unhappiness lies; and, as a result of the

family system, he realises the truth of the rule that he must love his wife and children in the same way as he loves himself, according to the doctrines, "ātmā vai putranāmāsi" (i.e., "your son is the same as yourself" ~Translator.),

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or "ardham bhāryā śarīrasya" (i.e., "your wife is half of your body" ~Translator.). But, the ultimate and most, comprehensive interpretation of the canon of Self-identification is, that the highest idea of manhood and the most complete fructification of the arrangement of the four states of life consists in: (i) realising that family life is but the first lesson in the science of Self-identification, and (ii) instead of being continually engrossed in the family, making one's Self-identifying Reason more and more comprehensive, by substituting one's friends, one's relations, or those born in the same gotra (clan) as oneself, or the inhabitants of one's own village, or the members of one's own community, or one's co-religionists, and ultimately all human beings, or all created beings, in the place of one's family, thereby realising that that Ātman, which is within oneself is also within all created beings; and that one should regulate one's conduct accordingly. And, it then naturally follows that the sacrificial ritual etc., or Karma, which enhances one's capacity to achieve this ideal state, is a purifier of the Mind, and a moral act, that is, such a duty as ought to be performed in the state of a householder.

Because, as I have already explained before, the true meaning of the word 'citta-śuddhi' (purification of the Mind) is the total elimination of selfishness, and the Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman; and the writers of the Smṛtis have enjoined the performance of the various duties pertaining to the state of a householder only for that purpose. The same is the deep meaning underlying the advice given by Yājñavalkya to Maitreyī in the words 'ātmā va are draṣṭavyaḥ' ('see first who the Ātman is' ~Translator.). The philosophy of Karma-Yoga, which has been based on the foundation of the Knowledge of the Supreme Self, advises everyone not to limit the extent of the Ātman by saying "ātmā vai putranāmāsi"; and says that one should, realise the inherent comprehensiveness of the Ātman by feeling that, "loko vai ayam ātmā", (i.e., "your Ātman is the whole universe"~Translator.), and that everyone should regulate one's activities, believing that "udāracaritānām tu vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam", i.e., "the whole universe is the family of noble-minded persons". And I am confident that, in this

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matter, our philosophy of Karma-Yoga will not only be not inferior to any other ancient philosophy of Karma-Yoga, but will even embrace all such philosophies like the Parameśvara, Who has embraced everything and has remained over to the extent of 'ten fingers'.

But, even to this position an objection is raised by some that: when a man has by this Self-identification acquired the comprehensive Vedantic vision of "vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam" (i.e., 'the universe is the family' ~Translator.), not only will virtues like pride of one's country, or of one's family or clan, or of one's religion etc., as a result of which some nations have now been fully advanced, be totally destroyed, but even if someone comes to kill us or to harm us, it will become our duty not to kill him in return with a harmful intent, having regard to the words of the Gītā: "nirvairaḥ sarvabhūteṣu" (Gī. 11.55) (i.e., non-inimical towards all created beings ~Translator.), (See Dhammapada, 338); and as a result of evil-doers being unchecked, good persons will run the risk of being the victims of evil deeds; and, as a result of the preponderance of evil-doers, the entire society or even a country will be destroyed. It is clearly stated in the Mahābhārata itself that "na pāpe pratipāpaḥ syāt sādhuḥ eva sadā bhavet" (Ma. Bhā, Vana. 206. 44), i.e., "do not become an evil-doer in dealing with evil-doers, but behave towards them like a saint"; because, "enmity is never done away with by enmity or by evil-doing" – "na cāpi vairaṁ vaireṇa keśava vyupaśāmyati"; that, on the other hand, the man whom we defeat, being inherently evil-minded, becomes more evil-minded as a result of the defeat, and is only waiting for the chance of revenging himself again – "jaya vairaṁ praśjati"; and that, therefore, it is proper to circumvent evil-doers by peace (Ma. Bhā. Udyo. 71.59 and



63). And these very stanzas in the Bhārata have been copied in the Buddhistic treatises (See Dhammapada, 5 and 201; Mahāvagga, 10.2 and 3); and even Christ has repeated the same principle by saying: "Love your enemies" (Matthew, 5.44), and, "but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matthew, 5.39), or "And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek, offer also the other" (Luke, 6.39). The same was the advice of the Chinese

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philosopher Lā-O-Tse, who lived before Christ, and there are even stories of this having been done by Ekanātha Maharaj and others from among our Maratha saints. I have not the slightest intention of belittling the sacred importance of these examples, which show the highest development of the principle of forgiveness or peace. There is no doubt that the religion of Forgiveness will, just like the religion of Truth, always remain permanent and without exception in the ultimate or the most perfect state of society. Nay, we even see in the imperfect condition of our present society, that results are achieved on various occasions by peace, which cannot be achieved by anger. When, in trying to find out what warriors had come forward to help Duryodhana, Arjuna saw venerable persons like ancestors and preceptors among them, he realised that in order to circumvent the evil-doings of Duryodhana, he would have to perform not only Action, but

also the difficult action of killing by his weapons those preceptors who had sold themselves for money (Gī. 2.5); and he began to say, that according to the rule, "na pāpe pratipāpaḥ syāt", it was not proper for him to become an evil-doer because Duryodhana had become an evil-doer; and that "even if they kill me, it is proper for me to sit quiet with a 'non-inimical' mind" (Gī. 1.46). The religion of the Gītā has been propounded solely for solving this doubt of Arjuna; and on that account, we do not anywhere come across an exposition of this subject, similar to the exposition made in the Gītā . For instance, both the Christian and the Buddhistic religions adopt the principle of Non-Enmity, as is done by the Vedic religion; but it is nowhere clearly stated either in the Buddhistic or in the Christian religious treatises, – or at any rate not in so many words – that it is not possible for the conduct of a person, who gives up all Energistic Action and renounces the world, disregarding universal welfare and even self-preservation, to be in all respects the same as the conduct of the Karma-yogin, who, notwithstanding that his Reason has become non-inimical and unattached, takes part in all Energistic activities with that same non-inimical, and unattached Reason. On the other hand, Western moralists find it very difficult to harmonise properly the advice of Non-Enmity given by Christ with worldly

morality, [1] and Nietzsche, a modern German philosopher, has fearlessly stated his opinion in his works, that the ethical principle of Non-Enmity is a slavish and destructive principle, and that the Christian religion, which gives a high place to that principle, has emasculated Europe. But, if one considers our religious treatises, one sees that the idea, that the two ethical and religious courses of Renunciation and Energism are to be distinguished from each other in this matter, was accepted by and was well-known not only to the Gītā but even to Manu. Because, Manu has prescribed the rule, "krudhyantaṁ na pratikrudhyet", i.e., "do not become angry in return towards one who has become angry towards you" (Manu. 6.48), only for Saṁnyāsins, and not for the householder or in regal science. I have shown above in the fifth chapter, that the method adopted by our commentators of mixing up the mutually contradictory doctrines pertaining to the two paths of Renunciation and Karma-Yoga, without taking into account what dictum applies to which path, and how it is to be used, gives rise to a confusion regarding the true doctrine of Karma-Yoga. When one gives up this confusing method adopted by the commentators on the Gītā, one can clearly understand in what sense the word Non-Enmity (nirvaira) is understood by the followers of the Bhāgavata religion or Karma-yogins. Because, even Prahlāda, that highest of the devotees of the Blessed Lord, has himself said that, "tasmān nityaṁ kṣamā tāta

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[1] See Paulsen's System of Ethics, Book III, Chap. X (Eng. Trails.) .and Nietzsche's Anti-Christ.

paṇḍitair apavāditā" (Ma. Bhā. Vana. 28.8), i.e., "therefore, my friend, wise men have everywhere mentioned exceptions to the principle of forgiveness", in order to show how the Karma-yogin householder should behave on these occasions. It is true that the ordinary rule of the doctrine of Self-identification is, that one should not cause harm to others by doing such Actions as, if done to oneself, would be harmful; yet the Mahābhārata has made it clear, that this rule should not be followed in a society, where there do not exist persons who follow the other religious principle, namely, "others should not cause harm

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to us", which is a corollary from this first principle. The word 'equability' is bound up with two individuals, that is, it is relative. Therefore, just as the principle of Non-Violence is not violated by killing an evil-doer, so also is the principle of Self-identification or of Non-Enmity, which is observed by saints, in no way affected by giving condign punishment to evil-doers. On the other hand, they acquire the merit of protecting others by having opposed the injustice of evil-doers. That Parameśvara, than Whom nobody's Reason can be more equable, Himself takes incarnations from time to time for protecting saints and destroying evil-doers, and thereby brings about universal welfare (lokasaṃgraha), (Gī. 4.1 and 8); then? how can the case of ordinary persons be different? To say that

the distinction between those who are deserving and those who are undeserving, or between what is proper and what improper, disappears, as a result of one's vision having become equable in such a way that he says: 'vasudhaiva kuṭūmbakam' (i.e., "the whole world is my family" –Trans) or of one's giving up the Hope for Fruit of Action, is a confusion of thought. The doctrine of the Gītā is that mine-ness (mamatva) is the predominant factor in the Hope for Fruit; and that unless that feeling is given up, one cannot escape the bondage of sin or merit. But, though I may have no object to achieve for myself, I nevertheless commit the sin of helping evil-doers or undeserving persons, and of harming deserving saints and even society itself to that extent, if I allow someone to take that which he ought not to get. Just as, though a multi-millionaire like Kubera goes to purchase vegetables in the market, he does not pay a lakh of rupees for a bundle of coriander leaves, so also does the man, who has reached the state of perfection, not forget the discrimination as to what is good for whom. It is true that his Season has become equable. But, 'equability' does not mean giving to a man the grass, which is fit for a cow, and to a cow, the food which is proper for a man; and with the same intention, the Blessed Lord has said in the Gītā that that sāttvika charity which is to be made as dātavya, that is, because it is a duty to give, must be given, considering "deśe kāle ca pātre ca", that is, considering the propriety of the place, the time, and the;

deservingness of the person (Gī. 17. 20). In describing this equable state of mind of saints, Jñāneśvara has compared them to the earth. The earth is also known as "sarvasahā" (i.e., one who bears everything ~Translator.). But, if this bearer-of-everything earth is given a kick, it proves its 'equability' by giving to the kicker an equally strong counter-kick. This clearly shows how one can make a non-inimical (nirvaira) resistance, even when there is no enmity in the heart; and that is why it is stated in the chapter on Causality of Action above (Effect of Karma) that the Blessed Lord remains free from the blame of partiality (vaiṣamya), cruelty (nairghṛṇya) etc., notwithstanding that He deals with people .as: "ye yathā mām prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham" (Gī. 4.11), i.e., "I give to them reward in the same manner and to the same extent as they worship me". In the same way, in ordinary life and according to law, no one calls the Judge, who directs the execution of a criminal, the enemy ,of the criminal. According to Metaphysics, when a man's Reason has become desireless and has reached the state -of equability, he does not of his own accord do harm to anybody; and if somebody is harmed as a result of something which he does, that harm is the result of the Karma of such other person; or in other words, the desireless Sthitaprajña does not, by the act which he performs in these circumstances – even if it appears as terrible as matricide, or the murder of a preceptor– incur the bondage or

the taint of the good or evil effects of the act.' (Gī. 4.14; 9.28; and 18.17). The rules of self-defence included in criminal law are based on the same principle. There is a tradition about Manu that when he was requested by people to become a king, he at first said:— "I do not wish to become a king for punishing persons who commit sins, and to thereby incur sin"; but when in return, "tam abruvan prajāḥ mā bhīḥ kartṛṇeno gamiṣyati" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 67. 23), that is, "people said to him: 'do not be afraid, the sinner will incur the sin, and you will acquire the merit of having protected the people", and, when on top of it, they further gave him a promise that: "we will give to you toy way of taxes that amount which will have to be expended for the protection of the people", he consented to become a

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king. In short, the natural laws of a reaction being equal in intensity and effect to the action, which is seen in the lifeless world, is translated into the principle of 'measure for measure' in the living world. Those ordinary persons whose Mind has not reached the state of equability, add their feeling of mine-ness (mamatva) to this law of Cause and Effect, and making the counterblow stronger than the blow, take their revenge for the blow; or if the other person is weak, they are ready to take advantage of some trifling or imaginary affront, and rob him to their own advantage, under pretext of retaliation. But, if a.

man, whose Mind has become free from the feelings of revenge, enmity, or pride, or free from the desire of robbing the weak as a result of anger, avarice, or hatred, or free from the desire of obstinately making an exhibition of one's greatness, authority, or power, which inhabits the minds of ordinary people, merely turns back a stone which has been thrown at him, that does not disturb the peacefulness, non-inimicality,. and equability of his Mind; and it is on the other hand his duty, from the point of view of universal welfare, to take such retaliatory action, for the purpose of preventing the predominance of wrong-doers and the consequent persecution of the weak in the world (Gī. 3.25); and the summary of the entire- teaching of the Gītā is that: even the most horrible warfare which may be carried on in these circumstances, with an equable state of mind, is righteous and meritorious. It is not that the Karma-yogin Sthitaprajña disregards the religious doctrines of behaving non-inimically towards everybody, not doing evil to evil-doers, or not getting angry with those who are angry with one. But, instead of accepting the doctrine of the School of Renunciation that 'Non-inimicality' (nirvaira) means inactivity or non-retaliation, the philosophy of Karma-Yoga says, that 'nirvaira' means merely giving up 'vaira' or 'the desire to do evil'; and that in as much as nobody can escape Karma, one should perform as much Karma as is- possible and necessary for retaliation or for social welfare, without entertaining an evil desire, and as a matter of duty,- and apathetically, and without Attachment



(Gī. 3. 19); and therefore, instead of using the word 'nirvaira' by itself, the

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Blessed Lord has placed the important adjective 'matkarmakṛt' before it, in the stanza:

matkarmakṛn matparamo madbhaktaḥ saṅgavarjitaḥ ।  
nirvairaḥ sarvabhūteṣu yaḥ sa mām eti pāṇḍava ॥ (Gī.  
11.55)

which (word 'matkarmakṛt') means 'one who performs Action for Me, that is, for the Parameśvara, and with the idea of dedicating it to the Parameśvara'; and the Blessed Lord has thus interlocked non-inimicality with Desireless Action, from the point of view of Devotion. And it has been stated in the Śāṅkarabhāṣya and also in other commentaries that this stanza contains the essential summary of the doctrine of the Gītā. It is nowhere stated in the Gītā that one should give up all kind of Action, in order to make one's mind non-inimical (nirvaira), or after it has become non-inimical. When a man in this way performs that amount of Action which is necessary for retaliation non-inimically and with the idea of dedicating it to the Parameśvara, he commits no sin what-soever; but what is more, when the work of retaliation is over, the desire to wish the good of the person whom he has punished, by Self -

identification, does not leave his mind. For example, when Bibhīṣaṇa was unwilling to attend to the obsequial ceremonies of Havana, after the sinless and non-inimical Rāmacandra had killed him (Rāvaṇa) in war, on account of his (Rāvaṇa's) evil doings, Śrī Rāmacandra has said to Bibhīṣaṇa:—

maraṇāntāni vairāṇi nivṛttiṁ naḥ prayojanam ।  
kriyatām asya saṁskāro mamāpyeṣa yathā tava ॥  
(Vālmīki Rā. 6.109.25)

that is; "the enmity (in the mind of Rāvaṇa) has come to an end with his death. My duty (of punishing evil-doers) has come to an end; now he is my (brother), just as he was your (brother); therefore, consecrate him into the fire". This principle mentioned in the Rāmāyaṇa has also in one place been, mentioned in the Bhāgavata (Bhāg. 8. 19. 13); and the same

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principle is conveyed by the traditions in the Purāṇas that the Blessed Lord had afterwards benevolently given an excellent state to those very evil-doers whom He Himself had killed. Śrī Samartha has used the words "meet impertinence by impertinence" (see p. 524 above ~Translator.) on the basis of the same principle; and in the Mahābhārata, Bhīṣma has, on the same principle, said to Paraśurāma:—

yo yathā vartate yasmin tasminn evaṁ pravartayan ।  
nādharmāṁ samavāpnoti na cāśreyaś ca vindati ॥ (Ma.  
Bhā. Udyo. 179.30)

that is, "there is no breach of religion (immorality) in behaving towards another person in the same way as he behaves towards you; nor does one's benefit thereby suffer"; and further on in Satyāṅṛtādhyāya of the Śāntiparva, the same advice has again been given to Yudhiṣṭhira in the following words:—

yasmin yathā vartate yo manuṣyāḥ  
tasmins tathā vartitavyaṁ sa dharmāḥ ।  
māyācāro māyayā bādhitavyaḥ  
sādhvācāraḥ sādhunā pratyupeyaḥ ॥ (Ma. Bhā. Śān.  
109. 29 and Udyo. 36.7)

that is, "Religion and Morality consist in behaving towards others in the same way as they behave towards us; one must behave deceitfully towards deceitful persons, and in a saintly way towards saintly persons". So also in the Ṛg-veda, Indra has not been found fault with for his deceitfulness, but has on the other hand, been praised in the following words: "tvam māyābhir anavadya māyinaṁ ... .. vṛtraṁ ardayaḥ" (Ṛg. 10.147.2; 1.80.7), i.e., "O, sinless Indra! you have by deceit killed Vṛtra, who was himself deceitful"; and ,the poet Bhāravi has in his drama Kirātārjunīyam repeated in the following words the principle enunciated in the Ṛg-veda:

vrajanti te mūḍhadhiyaḥ parābhavam ।

bhavanti māyāviṣu ye m māyinaḥ ॥ (Kīrā. 1.30)

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that is, "those, who do not become deceitful in dealing with deceitful persons, are themselves destroyed". But in this place it must also be borne in mind that if it is possible to offer retaliation to an evil-doer by a saintly act, such saintly act should in the first instance be attempted; because from the fact that the other man has become an evil-doer, it does not follow that one should also become an evil-doer with him, nor does it follow that others should cut their noses because someone has cut' his own nose; nay, there is even no Morality in that. This is the true meaning of the canon "na pāpe pratipāpaḥ syāt" (i.e., "do not become an evil-doer towards an evil-doer" ~Translator.); and for the same reason, Vidura, after having first mentioned to Dhṛtarāṣṭra in the Viduranīti, the ethical principle that, "na tat parasya sandadhyāt pratikulaṁ yad ātmanaḥ", i.e., "one should not behave towards others in a way which is undesirable from one's point of view", immediately afterwards says:—

akrodhena jayet krodhaṁ asādhūṁ sādhunā jayet ।

jayet kadaryaṁ dānena jayet satyena cāṅṛtam ॥ (Ma. Bhā. Udyo. 38.73, 74)

that is, "the anger (of others) should be conquered, by one's peacefulness; evil-doers should be conquered by saintliness; the miser should be conquered by gifts; and falsehood should be conquered by truth". This stanza has been copied word for word in the Buddhistic treatise on Morality in the Pali language, known as the Dhammapada, in the following stanza:—

akkodhena jine kodhaṃ asādhunā sādhunā jine |  
jine kadariyaṃ dānena saccen ālikavādinam ||  
(Dhammapada, 323)

and, in the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata, Bhīṣma, in counselling Yudhiṣṭhira, has praised this ethical principle in the following terms:—

karma caitad asādhūnām asādhū sādhunā jayet |  
dharmeṇa nidhanaṃ śreyo na jayaḥ pāpakarmaṇā ||  
(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 95.16)

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that is, "the asādhū, that is, 'evil' actions of evil-doers (asādhūnām) should be counteracted by saintly actions; because, even if death follows as a result of righteousness or Morality, that is better than the victory which follows from a sinful action". But, if the evilness of evil-doers is not circumvented by such saintly actions, or, if the counsel of

peacefulness or propriety is not acceptable to such evil-doers, then according to the principle "kaṇṭakenaiva kaṇṭakam" (i.e., "takeout a thorn by a thorn" ~Translator.), it becomes necessary to take out by a needle, that is, by an iron thorn, if not by an ordinary thorn, that thorn which will not come out by the application of poultices (Dāsa. 19.9, 12 – 31); because, under any circumstances, punishing evil-doers in the interests of general welfare, as was done by the Blessed Lord, is the first duty of saints from the point of view of Ethics. In enunciating the proposition "evilness should be conquered by saintliness", the fact that the conquest of or the protection from evil is the primary duty of a saint, is first taken for granted; and the first step to be taken for attaining that result is mentioned. But, it is nowhere stated by our moral philosophers, that if protection against evil-doers cannot be obtained by saintliness, one should not give 'measure for measure', and protect oneself, but should allow oneself to become a victim of the evil-doings of villains; and it must be borne in mind that, that man who has come forward to cut the throats of others by his own evil-doings, has no more any ethical right to expect that others should behave towards him like saints. Nay, it is clearly stated in our religious treatises, that when a saint is thus compelled to perform some unsaintly Action, the responsibility of such unsaintly Action does not fall on the pure-minded saint, but that the evil-doer must be held responsible for it, as it is the result of his evil doings (Manu. 8.19 and 351); and the punishment, which was meted out by the Blessed Buddha

himself to Devadatta, has been justified in Buddhistic treatises on the same principle (Milinda. Pra. 4.1.30 – 34). In the world of lifeless things, action and re-action always take place regularly and without a hitch. It is true that as the activities of a man are subject to his desires, and also, as the ethical knowledge necessary for deciding when.

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to use the trailokya-cintāmaṇi-mātrā (infallible remedy) in dealing with evil-doers, is very subtle, even a meritorious person is at times in doubt as to whether that which he would like to do is right or wrong, moral or immoral – "kiṃ karma kim akarmeti kavayopy atra mohitāḥ" (Gī. 4.16), (i.e., "what should be done and what should not be done is a question which puzzles even learned persons" ~Translator.). On these occasions, the right thing to do is to take as authoritative the decision which is arrived at by the pure mind of a saint, who has reached the highest state of complete equability of Reason, instead of depending on the wisdom of wise persons, who are always more or less subject to selfish desires, or merely on one's own powers of reasoning and discrimination; because, as arguments and counter-arguments wax in direct ratio with the power of inferential logic, these difficult questions are never truly or satisfactorily solved by mere wisdom, and. without the help of pure Reason; and one has to seek the shelter and protection of a pure and desireless

preceptor to arrive at such a solution. The Reason of those law-givers, who are universally respected, has become pure in this way; and, therefore, the Blessed Lord has said to Arjuna in the Bhagavadgītā that:– "tasmāc chāstraṁ pramāṇam te kāryākārya-vyavasthitau" (Gī. 16.24), i.e., "in discriminating between what should be done and what should not be done, you must look to the authority of the religious and moral treatises". At the same time, it must not be forgotten, that saintly law-givers like Śvetaketu, who come later in point of time, acquire the authority of effecting changes even in these religious principles.

The prevalent misconception regarding the conduct in. life of non-inimical and peaceful saints is due to the fact that the Path of Karma-Yoga is now practically extinct, and the Path of Renunciation, which considers all worldly life as discardable, is on all hands being looked upon as superior. The Gītā neither advises nor intends that when one becomes non-inimical, one should also become non-retaliatory. To that man who does not care for universal welfare, it is just the same whether or not evil-doers predominate in the world, and whether or not he continues to live, But, the philosophy of



Karma-Yoga teaches us that though the Karma-yogins, who have leached the most perfect state, behave non-inimically towards all created beings, recognising the identity of the Ātman in all, they never fail to do that duty which has befallen them according to their own status in life, after discriminating between who is worthy and who unworthy, with a frame of mind, which is unattached; and that any Action which is performed in this manner, does not in the least prejudicially affect the equability of Reason of the doer. When this principle of the Karma-Yoga in the Gītā has been accepted, one can properly account for and justify the pride of one's family, the pride of one's country, or other similar duties on the basis of that principle. Although the ultimate doctrine of this philosophy is that, that is to be called Religion which leads to the benefit of the entire human race, nay of all living beings, yet, as pride of one's family, pride of one's religion, and pride of one's country are the ascending steps which lead to that highest of all states, they never become unnecessary. Just as the worship of the qualityful (saguṇa) Brahman is necessary in order to attain to the quality less (nirguṇa) Brahman, so also is the ladder of pride of one's family, pride of one's community, pride of one's religion, pride of one's country etc. necessary in order to acquire the feeling of "vasudhaiva kuṭumbakam" (i.e., "the whole universe IB the family" ~Translator.); and as every generation of society climbs up this ladder, it is always necessary to keep this ladder intact. In the same way, if persons around one, or the other countries around one's

country, are on a lower rung of this ladder, it is not possible for a man to say that he will always remain alone on a higher rung of the ladder; because, as has been stated above, those persons who are on the higher steps of that ladder, have occasionally to follow the principle of 'measure for measure', in order to counteract the injustice of those who are on the lower steps. There is no doubt that the state of every human being in the world, will improve gradually and reach the stage when everyone realises the identity of the Ātman in every created being. At any rate, it is not improper to entertain the hope of creating such a frame of mind in every human being. But, it naturally

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follows that so long as everyone has not reached this ultimate state of development of the Ātman, saints must, having regard to the state of other countries or other societies, preach the creed of pride of one's country etc., which will for the time being be beneficial to their own societies. Besides, another-thing, which must also be borne in mind is that, as it is not possible to do away with the lower floors of a building, when the higher floors are built; or, as the pick-axe does not cease to be necessary, because one has got a sword in one's hand; or, as fire does not cease to become necessary, because one has also got the Sun, so also does patriotism, or the pride of one's family, not become unnecessary, although one has reached

the topmost stage of the welfare of all created things. Because, considering the matter from the point of view of the reform of society, that specific function, which is performed by the pride of one's family, cannot be got merely out of pride of one's country, and the specific function, which is performed' by the pride of one's country, is not achieved by the Realisation of the identity of the Ātman in all created beings, In- short, even in the highest state of society, patriotism and pride- of one's family and other creeds are always necessary to the same extent as Equability of Reason. But, as one nation is prepared to cause any amount of harm to another nation for its own benefit, on the basis that the pride of one's own country is the only and the highest ideal, such a state of things is not possible if the benefit of all created beings is looked upon as such ideal. If there is a conflict between the pride of one's family, the pride of one's country, and ultimately the benefit of the entire human kind, then, according- to the important and special preaching of that Ethics, which is replete with Equability of Reason, duties of a lower order should be sacrificed for duties of a higher order. When Vidura was advising Dhṛtarāṣṭra, that rather than not give a share of the kingdom to the Pāṇḍavas, at the desire of Duryodhana, and thereby run the risk of the whole clan being destroyed in the resulting war, he (dhārtarāṣṭrā) should give up the single individual Duryodhana, though Duryodhana

was his son, if he was obstinate, he (Vidura) in support of his position has said:—

tyajet ekaṁ kulasyārthe grāmasyārthe kulaṁ tyajet ।  
grāmāṁ janapadasyārthe ātmārthe pṛthivīm tyajet ॥  
(Ma. Bhā. Ādi. 111.36; Sabhā. 61.11)

that is, "for protecting a family, one person may be abandoned; for a town may be abandoned; and for the protection of the Ātman, even the earth may be abandoned." The principle mentioned above is borne out by the first three parts of this stanza, and the fourth part of the stanza enunciates the principle of the protection of the Ātman. As the word 'Ātman' is a common pronoun, this doctrine of Self-protection applies to a united society, community, country or empire, in the same way as it applies to an individual, and when one considers the rising gradation of one man for a family, a family for a town, a town for a country, etc., one sees clearly that the word Atman, must be considered to carry a higher value than all the other things. Nevertheless, some selfish persons, or persons unacquainted with ethical principles, sometimes interpret this part of the stanza in quite a perverse way, as importing merely selfishness, it is therefore necessary to mention here that this principle of protection of the Ātman is not the same as the principle of selfishness. Because, these moral philosophers who have declared the path advocated by the self-worshiper Cārvāka as devilish

(See, Gī. Chap. 16) cannot preach to anyone the destruction of the universe for one's own selfish interests. The word 'arthe' in the above stanza does not indicate merely a selfish interest, but must be interpreted as meaning 'for defending oneself against a calamity, if it has come'; and the same meaning is also to be found in dictionaries. There is a world of difference between selfishness and protection of the Self (Ātman). Causing the detriment of others, being inspired by the desire of enjoying objects of pleasure, or by avarice, and for one's own benefit is selfishness. This is inhuman and forbidden, and it is stated in the first three parts of the above stanza, that one must always consider the benefit of the multitude, rather

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than of an individual. Yet, as there is one and the same Ātman in all created things, everyone has an inherent natural light of being happy in this world; and no single individual or society in the world can ever ethically acquire the right to cause the detriment of another individual or society by disregarding this universal, important, and natural right, merely because the one is more than the other in numbers, or in strength, or because the one has a larger number of means than the other for conquering the other. If, therefore, someone seeks to justify the selfish conduct of a society, which is bigger in numbers than another society, on the ground that the benefit of a larger multitude, is of higher importance than the benefit

of an individual or of a smaller multitude, such a method of reasoning must be looked upon as demonical (rākṣasī). Therefore, the fourth part of the stanza says, that if other people behave unjustly in this way, then the inherent ethical right of everybody of protecting himself, is of higher importance than the benefit of a larger multitude; nay, of even the whole world; and this has been mentioned along with the matter explained in the first three parts of the stanza, as an important exception to the principle enunciated in them. Further, it must also be realised, that one can bring about universal welfare only if one lives; therefore, even considering the matter from the point of view of universal benefit, one has to say with Viśvāmitra that "jīvan dharmam avāpnuyāt", i.e., "one can think of Morality, only if one remains alive"; or, with Kālidāsa that, "śarīraṁ ādyaṁ khalu dharmasāadhanam" (Kumā. 5.33), i.e., "the body is the fundamental means of bringing about Morality"; or, with Manu, that, "ātmānaṁ satataṁ rakṣet", i.e. "one should always protect oneself". But although this right of self-protection thus becomes higher than the benefit of the world, yet, as has been mentioned above in the second chapter, saints are, of their own will, willing on several occasions to sacrifice their lives for their family, or country, or religion, or for the good of others; and the same principle has been enunciated in the three parts of the above stanza. As on these occasions, the man of his own free will sacrifices his important right of Self-protection, the ethical "value of such an act is considered higher than that of all other

acts, Yet, it becomes quite clear from the story of dhārtarāṣṭrā, mentioned above, that mere learning or logic is not sufficient, to rightly determine whether such an occasion has arisen, and that in order to arrive at a correct decision on that matter, the inner consciousness (antaḥkaraṇa) of the person, who wishes to decide, must first have become pure and equable. It is not. that Dhṛtarāṣṭra was so feeble-minded as not to understand the advice which was given by Vidura. But, as has been stated' in the Mahābhārata itself, his Reason could not become-equable as a result of his love for his son. Just as Kubera is never in need for a lakh of rupees, so the man whose Mind has become equable, experiences no dearth of the feeling of the identity of the Ātman in the members of a family, or a country, or in co-religionists, or any other inferior orders of identities. All these identities are included in the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman; and saints carry on the maintenance and welfare of the world by preaching to different persons either their duty to their country, or their duty to their family f or other narrow religions, or the comprehensive religion of universal welfare, as may be meritorious for a particular-person on a particular occasion, according to the state of his-Reason, or for his own protection. It is true that in the present state of the human race, patriotism has become the highest religion; and even civilised countries utilise their learning, skill,

and money, in contemplating on and preparing for the destruction of as large a number of persons in as short a time as possible, from a neighbouring inimical country, as- soon as the occasion arises. But Spencer, Comte, and other philosophers have distinctly maintained in their works, that one cannot, on that account, look upon that as the highest, ethical ideal of the human race; and I do not understand how that objection, which has not been raised to the doctrine preached by them, can become effective as against the doctrine of the identity of the- Ātman in all created beings, which arises from our Metaphysical philosophy. As, when the child is young, one has to make its clothes as will fit its body – or perhaps slightly bigger, because it is growing – so also is the case with the Realisation of identity of the Ātman in all created beings. Be it a society or an individual, if the

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ideal placed before it, in the shape of the identity of the Ātman in all created beings, is consistent with the spiritual qualification of that individual or society, or at most a little advanced, it will be beneficial to it; but if one asks that society or individual to achieve something, how excellent soever, which is more than it can accomplish, it will never be benefited by it. That is why the worship of the Parabrahman has been prescribed in the Upaniṣads by rising gradations, though in fact the Parabrahman is not circumscribed by any grades; and



though a warrior class is not necessary in a society in which everyone has reached the state of a Sthitaprajña, yet, our religion has included that caste in the arrangement of the four castes, having regard to the contemporary state of other societies in the world, and on the basis of the principle "ātmānaṁ satataṁ rakṣet" (i.e., "protect yourself at all times" ~Translator.); and even in that highest and ideal state of society which has been mentioned in his works by the Greek philosopher Plato, the highest importance has been given to the class which becomes proficient in warfare by constant practice, because that class occupies the position of protectors of society. This will clearly show that though philosophers are always immersed in the contemplation of the highest and purest of ideas, they never fail to take into account the then prevailing imperfect state of society.

When all things have been considered in this way, it becomes clear that the true duty of sages is (i) to keep their own Reason free from objects of pleasure, peaceful, non-inimical, and equable, by Realising the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman; and (ii) without getting disgusted with ordinary ignorant people, because they themselves have attained this high state of mind, and without perverting the Reason of such ordinary people, by themselves abandoning worldly duties and accepting the state of Abandonment of Action (karma-saṁnyāsa), to preach to people whatever is proper for them, having regard to prevailing conditions, and to place before

their eyes the living example of a model moral life, in the shape of their own desireless adherence to duty , and (iii) in that way to place all on the path of betterment, as gradually and peacefully as possible, but at the same time

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enthusiastically. This is what is done by the Blessed Lord <by taking various incarnations from time to time; and the sum and substance of the entire philosophy of the Gītā is, that scientists should follow the same example, and should at all times continue to do their duty in this world desirelessly, and to the best of their abilities, and with a pure mind, and without an eye to the Fruit; that they should be willing to lay down their lives, if necessary, while they are doing so (Gī. 3.35); and that they must not under any circumstances fail in their duty. This is what is known as universal welfare (lokasaṁgraha); and this is the true Karma-Yoga. It was only when the Blessed Lord had explained to Arjuna this wisdom about what should be done and what should not be done, on the basis of Vedānta, simultaneously with explaining Vedānta to him, that Arjuna, who at first was on the point of giving up warfare and taking up the life of a mendicant, was later on ready to participate in the terrible war – not only because the Blessed Lord asked him to do so, but voluntarily. This principle of the equable Reason of the Sthitaprajña (Steady-in-Mind), which had been preached to Arjuna, being the fundamental basis of the philosophy of

Karma-Yoga, I have in this chapter taken that as a hypothesis, and after having explained how the highest principles of Ethics are justified and explained on the basis of that principle, I have afterwards shortly stated the prominent parts of the philosophy of Karma- Yoga, such as: how people should behave towards each other in society from the point of view of Self-Identification; what modifications become necessary in the principles of Absolute Ethics, as a result of the law of 'measure for measure', or as a result of the worthiness or unworthiness of the person one has to deal with; as also how saints living in morally imperfect societies have to follow principles of morality, which are exceptions to the general principles etc. If the same method of argument is applied to the questions of justice, charity, philanthropy, kindness, non-violence, truth, not-stealing and other eternal principles, and if even a separate treatise is written on each of these subjects, in order to show what modifications will have to be made in the case of each of them, as occasion arises, consistently with the present morally imperfect

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state of society, they will not be exhausted; and that is also not the principal object of the Bhagavadgītā. I have, in the second chapter of this book, touched on the questions of how a conflict arises between Non-Violence and Truth, or Truth and Self- Protection, or Self-Protection and Peacefulness etc., and

how, on that account, there arises at times a doubt as to what should be done and what should not be done. It is clear, that on such occasions, saints make a careful discrimination between 'ethical principles,' 'ordinary worldly affairs,' 'self-interest', 'benefit of all created things' etc., and then arrive at a decision as to what should be done and what should not be done; and this fact has been definitely stated by the śyena bird to king Śibi in the Mahābhārata; and the English writer Sidgwick has, in his Book on Ethics, propounded the same principle in great detail, and by giving many examples; but the inference drawn from this fact by several Western philosophers, that the accurate balancing of self-interest and other's- interest, is the only basis for determining ethical laws, has never been accepted by our philosophers; because, according to our philosophers, this discrimination is very often so subtle and so 'anaikāntika', that is, so productive of so many conclusions, that unless the Equability of realising that 'the other man is the same as myself, has been thoroughly impressed on one's mind, it is impossible to arrive at an invariably correct discrimination between what should be done and what should not be done, merely by inferential reasoning; and if one does so, it will be a case of 'the pea-hen tries to dance because the 'the peacock dances'. This is the main drawback in the arguments of Western Utilitarians like Mill and others. If because an eagle, swooping down, takes a lamb in its claws high up in the air, a crow also attempts to do so, he is sure to come to grief; therefore, the Gītā says, that it

is not sufficient to place reliance merely on the outward devices adopted by saints; and that one must depend on the principle of an equable Reason, which is always alive in their hearts; and that Equability of Reason is the true root of the philosophy of Karma-Yoga. Some modern Materialistic philosophers maintain that SELF-INTEREST is the basic foundation of Ethics; whereas others give that place to

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PHILANTHROPY, that is, 'the greatest good of the greatest-number'. But I have shown above in the fourth chapter, that, these principles, which touch merely tie external results of Action, do not meet all situations; and that one has necessarily to consider to what extent the Reason of the doer is pure. It' is true that the discrimination between the outward effects of Action, is a sign of wisdom and far-sightedness. But, far-sightedness is not synonymous with Ethics; and, therefore, our philosophers have come to the conclusion that the true basis of Proper Action does not lie in the mere mercenary process of discriminating between different external Actions; and that' the HIGHEST IDEAL (paramārtha) in the shape of Equability of Reason, is the fundamental basis of Ethics; and one comes to the same conclusion if one properly considers what the most perfect state of the Personal Self (Jīvātman), is; because, though many persons are adepts in the art of robbing each other by avarice, nobody says that this cleverness, or the

futile- Knowledge of the Brahman, consisting of knowing in what? 'the greatest good of the greatest number' lies, is the highest ideal of everyone in this world. That man alone is the highest of men, whose Reason is pure. Nay; one may even say that the man, who, without having a stainless, non-inimical, and pure mind, is only engrossed in the calculating discrimination between outward Actions, runs the risk of becoming a hypocrite (See Gī. 3.6). If one accepts Equability of Reason, as the basis of the philosophy of Karma-Yoga, this objection, does not arise. It is true that by taking Equability of Reason as the fundamental basis, one has to consult saints for determining between morality and immorality, in circumstances of exceptional difficulty; but there is no help for that. Just as when a man is down with a very serious illness, its diagnosis or treatment is impossible without the help of a clever doctor so also will it be futile for an ordinary person to proudly imagine that he will be able to arrive at a faultless-decision between morality and immorality, without the help of saints, and merely on the basis of the principle of 'the greatest good of the greatest number', when there is a difficult and doubtful situation. One must always increase Equability of Reason by constant practice,, and when the minds of all

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the human beings in the world gradually reach the state of perfect Equability in this way, the Kṛtayuga will start, and the

highest ideal or the most perfect state of the human race will be reached by everyone. The philosophy of the Duty and Non-Duty has been evolved for this purpose; and, therefore, the edifice of that philosophy must also be based on the foundation of Equability of Reason. But, even if one does not go so deep as that, but only considers Ethics from the point of view of the test of public opinion, the theory of Equability of Reason expounded in the Gītā, is seen to be more valuable and more consistent with fundamental principles, than the Western Materialistic or Intuitionist philosophies, as will be apparent from the comparative examination of these different principles made by me later on in the fifteenth chapter. But, before coming to that subject, I shall deal with one important part of the explanation of the import of the Gītā, which still remains to be dealt with.

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# CHAPTER XIII.

## THE PATH OF DEVOTION.

### (BHAKTI-MĀRGA).

sarvadharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja ।

ahaṁ tvā sarvapāpebhyo mokṣayaīṣyāmi mā śucaḥ ॥ [1]

~ Gītā. (18.66).

I have so far dealt, from the Metaphysical point of view, with the question of how the Desireless Realisation of the identity of the Ātman in all created beings, which is instilled into the body, is the foundation of the Karma-Yoga and of Release; and of how this pure Reason is acquired by Realising the identity of the Ātman and the Brahman; and why everyone must, so long as life lasts, perform the duties, which have befallen him according to his status in life, with his pure Reason. But, the subject-matter preached in the Bhagavadgītā is not thereby exhausted; because, although there is no doubt that the

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[1] "Give up all kinds of religions (dharma), that is, means of attaining the Parameśvara, and surrender yourself to Me alone. I shall redeem you from all sins, do not be afraid". See the explanation of the meaning of this stanza at the end of this chapter.



Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman is the only true Reality and the ideal, and that " there is nothing in the world which is equally holy " (Gī. 4.38), yet, in as much as the consideration of that subject-matter, which has been made so far, as also the path or manner of acquiring that Equability of Reason, is wholly dependent on the Reason itself, ordinary persons feel a doubt as to how one can acquire that keenness of Intelligence by which that path or manner can be fully realised, and whether if somebody's Reason is not so keen, that man must be considered as lost; and such a doubt is certainly not ill-founded. They say: if even the greatest of Jñānins have to say 'neti, neti ' (i.e., 'It is not this, It is not that' ~Translator.) in describing that your immortal highest Brahman (Parabrahman), which is clothed in the perishable Name-d and Form-ed Māyā, how are ordinary persons like us to understand it? Therefore, why should anyone be found fault with

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if he asks to be shown some easy path or manner, by following which this deep knowledge of the Brahman can come within the periphery of his limited receptiveness? It is stated in the Gītā and in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad that though there are many who; being struck by astonishment, describe their experience of the Ātman (that is, of the Brahman), and though there are others who listen to that description, yet, no one understands that Ātman (Gī. 2.29; Kaṭha. 2.7); and there is even a very

instructive story about this in one place in the Śruti texts. In this story, there is a description that when Bāṣkali asked Bāhva the question: "My lord, explain to me, please, what the Brahman is", Bāhva would not give any answer. Though Bāṣkali repeated that question, Bāhva was still silent. When- this had happened three or four times, Bāhva said to Bāṣkali: "I have been all this while giving an answer to your question, and yet you 'do not understand it. What more can I do? The form of the Brahman cannot be described in any way, and therefore, remaining quiet and not giving any description of it, is the truest description of the Brahman. Have you now understood it?" (Ve. Sū. Śāñ. Bhā. 3.2.17). In short, how is a man possessing only an ordinary Reason to- realise this indescribable, unimaginable Parabrahman, which is absolutely different from the visible world (dṛśyaśṛṣṭivilakṣaṇa), and which can be described only by keeping quiet, which can be seen only after the eyes have ceased to see, and which can be Realised only after one has ceased to Realise? (Kena. 2.11); and how is a man to thereby acquire the state of Equability and afterwards attain Release? If there is no means except a keen intelligence for realising by- personal experience and in all its bearings, the form of the Parameśvara described by the words "there is only one Ātman in all created beings", and for thereby attaining the highest excellence, then, millions of people in the world must give up the hope of attaining the Brahman, and sit quiet; because, highly intelligent people are necessarily always few. If one says that it 'will be enough to

place reliance on what these scientists say, we come across numerous differences of opinion even among the scientists. Besides, if one says that it is enough to merely place such reliance, it necessarily follows that the

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path of 'faith' or 'belief' is open for acquiring this recondite Knowledge, in addition to the path of Reason; and really-speaking, it will be seen that Knowledge does not become complete or even fruitful without Religious Faith (śraddhā). That all Knowledge is acquired merely by Intelligence, and that no other mental faculties are necessary for that purpose is an idle belief of certain philosophers, whose minds have become crude as a result of life-long contact with sciences based on inferential reasoning. For instance, let us take the proposition that, 'to-morrow morning the Sun will rise again'. We think that the knowledge contained in this proposition is absolutely immutable. Why? Because, we and our ancestors have seen this occurrence going on uninterruptedly so long. But, if one considers the matter deeply enough, it will be seen that the fact that one and one's ancestors have so far seen the Sun rising daily can never become a reason for the Sun to rise to-morrow, that the Sun does not rise every day in order that one should see it rise, nor because one sees it rise; and that the reasons for the Sun to rise are quite different. And if the fact that you see the Sun rise every day, cannot be a reason for the

Sun to rise to-morrow, what guarantee is there that the Sun will rise to-morrow? After a particular occurrence has been observed to take place in the case of a particular thing for a GREAT LENGTH of TIME, concluding that that occurrence will continue in future PERMANENTLY is a kind of Faith; and although we may give it the high sounding name of 'inference', yet, it must be borne in mind that this inference is not an inference based on a consideration of Cause and Effect, and arrived at by the Intelligence, but is fundamentally based on Faith. The inference drawn by us that because Rāma finds sugar sweet, Soma will also find it sweet, is, as a matter of fact, fundamentally of the same nature; because, though it is true that our Intelligence actually experiences the knowledge that sugar is sweet, yet, when we go beyond that, and say that all persons find sugar sweet, we have to combine Faith with Intelligence. In the same way, it need not be told that in order to understand the principle of Geometry, that it is possible to have two straight lines which will never touch each other, however far

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they may be extended, one has to go beyond the bounds of all personal experience, with the help of Faith. Besides, all the activities of the world go on with the help of inherent mental faculties like Faith, Love etc., and Intelligence does nothing beyond controlling these mental faculties. I have explained

above in the chapter on the Body and the Ātman, that when once the good or bad nature of any particular thing has been ascertained by the Intelligence, the further execution of that decision has to be carried out with the help of the Mind or of the mental faculties. Therefore, in order to perfect the knowledge which has been acquired by Intelligence, and in order that that knowledge should be translated by means of the Intelligence into behaviour and action, such knowledge has always to rely on Faith, Kindness, Affection, Love of Duty, and other inherent mental tendencies; and that knowledge which does not rely on the help of these mental tendencies after they have been awakened and purified, must be looked upon as bare, incomplete, perversely inferential, and barren or immature. Just as the bullet in a gun cannot be fired without the help of gunpowder, so also can the knowledge acquired merely by Intelligence not redeem anyone without the help of mental qualities like Love, Faith, etc.; and this principle was fully known to our ancient Ṛṣis. For example, it is stated in the Chāndogya that in order to prove to Śvetaketu that, the imperceptible and subtle Parabrahman is the fundamental cause of the visible world, his father, asked him to bring the fruit of a banyan tree (vaṭa-vṛkṣa), and to see what was inside. When Śvetaketu had cut open that fruit and seen inside, he said:—"there are innumerable minute seeds or grains inside." When his father again said to him: "take one of those seeds, and tell me what is inside it", Śvetaketu replied: "I see nothing inside the seed ". To that his father replied: "O my son, this

tremendous banian tree (vaṭa-vṛkṣa) has sprung from that nothing which you see inside"; and his father has ultimately said to him, "śraddhasva", i.e., "put faith in this", that is, "do not merely keep this idea in your Mind, and say 'yes' to my face, but go beyond it; in short, let this principle be impressed on your heart, and let it be translated into your actions" (Chan. 6. 12). If Faith is ultimately necessary in

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order to obtain the definite knowledge that the Sun is going to rise to-morrow morning, then it undoubtedly follows that after having gone by the cart-road of Intelligence as far as possible for completely Realising the eternal, unending, all-causing, all-knowing, independent, and vital Principle, Which is the root of the entire universe, one has to go further, at least to some extent, by the foot-path of Faith and Affection. That woman whom a man looks upon as venerable and worshipful, because she is his mother, is looked upon by others as an ordinary woman, or according to the scientific camouflage of words of Logicians, she is "garbhadhāraṇāprasavādi strītvā-sāmānyāvacchedakāvacchinnavyaktiviśeṣaḥ". From this simple example, one can easily understand the difference brought about. by pouring the Knowledge acquired by mere inference, into' the mould of Faith and Affection; and for this very reason, it is stated in the Gītā that "the most excellent Karma-Yogin from among all, is the one who has Faith" (Gī. 6.47); and, as

has been stated above, there is also a theorem of the Philosophy of the Absolute Self that, "acintyāḥ khalu ye bhāvāḥ na tāms tarkeṇa cintayet", i.e., "the form of those objects which, being beyond the organs, cannot be imagined, should not be determined merely by the help of inference".

If the only difficulty were that the qualityless Parabrahman is difficult to Realise for ordinary persons, then, that difficulty could be overcome by Faith or confidence, though there might be a difference of opinion among the intelligent persons; because, in that case we could judge for ourselves which of these intelligent persons was more reliable, and put faith in his statements (Gī. 13.25). In logic, this course is known as. 'āpta-vacana-pramāṇa' (i.e., "belief in the statements of a credible person" ~Translator.), 'āpta' means a reliable person. If we look at the affairs of the world, we see that hundreds of persons carry on their activities, relying on the statements of trustworthy persons. There will be very few persons who will be in a position to explain scientifically why two into five is equal to ten and not seven, or why when a second figure one is placed after the first figure one, we get eleven, and not two. Nevertheless, the affairs of the world are going on in the belief by Faith that these statements-

are true. We will come across very few persons who will have an actual personal knowledge of the fact whether the height of the Himalayas is five miles or ten miles; yet, if someone asks us what the height of the Himalayas is, the figure of "23000 feet", learnt by heart by us in school from books on Geography at once escapes from our lips. Then, if someone says to us: 'describe the nature of the Brahman', what is the objection to our saying: 'it is qualityless'? Although the ordinary man in the street may not have sufficient intelligence to investigate into whether or not it is really qualityless, and to discuss the pros and cons, yet, Faith is not such a quality that it is possessed only by persons of the highest intelligence. Even the most ignorant man has no dearth of faith, and if he carries on all his numerous affairs with the help of Faith, there is not the slightest difficulty in the way of his believing by Faith that the Brahman is qualityless. Even if one considers the history of the doctrine of Release, it will be seen that even before Jñānins had come to the conclusion that the Brahman is qualityless, after having analysed its nature and form, man had by Faith come to the conclusion that there was, at the bottom of the created universe, some Principle far different from and stranger than the perishable and mutable things in the world, Which was eternal, immortal, independent, omnipotent, omniscient, and all-pervasive; and he had been worshipping it in some form or other. It is true that he could not at that time explain or justify this Knowledge; but even in the Material sciences, the rule is that the experience comes first, and the



explanation or justification of it comes afterwards. For instance, before Bhāskarācārya discovered the principle of gravity of the earth, and ultimately Newton discovered the principle of gravity of the entire universe, the fact that the fruit from a tree falls down to the earth, was known to everyone from times immemorial. The same argument applies to Metaphysics. It is true that the purpose of Intelligence is to analyse the Knowledge which has been acquired by Faith, and to give an explanation of it; but though a proper explanation of that Realisation is not forthcoming, it cannot, on that account, he said that the Knowledge which has been acquired by Faith is a mere illusion.

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If it were enough, merely to believe that the Brahman is qualityless, there is no doubt that that could be done merely by Faith as stated above (Gī. 13.5). But, as has been stated at the end of the ninth chapter, the bare Realisation that the Brahman is qualityless, is not enough to enable a person to reach his highest ideal in this world, namely, the Brāhmī state or the state of the Siddha (Perfect). That Knowledge must be made to permeate the heart and the bodily organs by means of intense practice and continual habit, and the Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman must become an inherent nature, by means of constant behaviour consistent with that idea; and the only way for achieving that result is to

imbibe the nature and form of the Parameśvara by Love, and to make one's mind uniform with the Parameśvara. This measure or method has been in vogue in our country from times immemorial, and it is known as "Worship (upāsana) or Devotion (bhakti). The Śāṇḍilya-Sūtra defines 'Bhakti' as: "sā (bhaktiḥ) parānuraktir īśvare", i.e., 'bhakti' is the 'para,' that is, the most intense love towards the Īśvara " (Śān. Sū. 2). 'para' does not mean only 'most intense'; but it must also be purposeless (nirhetuka), that is, it must not be for this or that purpose, but unselfish and immutable. It is stated in the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa that it must be "ahetukya vyavahitā yā bhaktiḥ puruṣottame" (Ma. Bhā. 3.29.12); because when the Devotion is purposeful (sahetuka), and the man says: " O, God! give me a particular thing," it, to some extent, acquires a mercenary appearance like the Desireful Vedic sacrificial ritual. When Devotion thus becomes mercenary or rājasa, one does not thereby acquire purification of the Mind; and if the purification of the Mind is not complete, Metaphysical excellence or the obtaining of Release is to that extent prejudiced. As the principle of total Desirelessness, which is part of the philosophy of the Highest Self (adhyātma-śāstra), thus also finds a place in the Path of Devotion, the Gītā has divided the devotees of the Blessed Lord into four classes, and has stated that the Devotee, who worships the Parameśvara, 'arthārthī', that is, 'with some particular motive', is of a lower order, and the Jñānin, who like Nārada and others, worships

the Blessed Lord merely as a matter of duty, like other  
desireless

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Actions, though he has Realised the Parameśvara and has,  
therefore, nothing more to obtain (Gī. 3.18) is the most  
excellent of all (Gī. 7.16 – 18). This Devotion is of nine kinds  
according to the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa as follows:—

śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ smaraṇaṁ pādasevanam |  
arcanaṁ vandanaṁ dāsyam sakhyam ātmanivedanam  
|| (Bhāg. 7.5.23).

(that is: "listening to the praise of Viṣṇu, praising Him, thinking  
of Him, serving at His feet, worshipping Him, bowing down  
before Him, being His slave, loving Him, and dedicating oneself  
to Him" ~Translator.); and in the Bhakti-Sūtra by Nārada, it is  
divided into eleven classes. But, as all these kinds of Devotion  
have been described in detail in the Dāsabodha and other  
Marathi books, I will not further discuss them here. Whatever  
may be the nature of the Devotion, it is clear that the ordinary  
purpose of Devotion, namely, of cultivating an intense and  
Desireless love for the Parameśvara, and forming one's mental  
tendencies accordingly, must be carried out by every man with  
the help of his Mind; because, as has been explained by me  
above in the sixth chapter, the internal organ of Intelligence

does nothing beyond deciding between what is good or bad, righteous or unrighteous, and performable or unperformable; and all the other mental functions have to be carried out by the Mind itself. Therefore, we now arrive at the Dual division, (i) the Mind, and (ii) the object of worship, that is to say, the object which is to be loved; but that most excellent form of the Brahman, which has been advocated in the Upaniṣads, is beyond the organs, imperceptible, eternal, qualityless, and 'ekamevādvitīyam', (i.e., 'one alone, without a second' ~Translator.); and therefore, one cannot start one's worship with the Brahman. Because, when one realises this excellent form of the Brahman, the Mind does not any more remain a separate entity, and, as has been stated before in the chapter on the Philosophy of the Absolute Self, the worshipper and the worshipped, or the Knower (jñātā) and the Knowable (jñeya) both become uniform. The qualityless Brahman is the ultimate goal, it is not the means to be employed for reaching the goal;.

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and unless the mind acquires, by some means or other, the capacity of becoming unified with the qualityless Brahman, one cannot personally get a vision of this excellent form of the Brahman. Therefore, the Form of the Brahman which has to be taken for the Devotion or Worship to be performed, as a means of Realising the Brahman, is of the second order, that is to say, it is the qualityful (saṁguṇa) form, which can be Realised

by the Mind, on account of the difference between the worshipper and the worshipped; and therefore, wherever the worship of the Brahman has been prescribed in the Upaniṣads, the Brahman to be worshipped has been described as qualityful, notwithstanding that it is imperceptible. For example, although that Brahman, of which the worship has been prescribed in the Śāṇḍilya-Vidyā, is imperceptible, that is, formless, yet, it is stated in the Chāndogyopaniṣad, that it must possess existence (satya-saṁkalpa), and also all such faculties as smelling (gandha), tasting (rasa), and acting (karma), which are perceptible to the Mind (Chān. 3.14). Although the Brahman to be worshipped is in this case qualityful, yet, it is imperceptible (avyakta), that is, formless (nirākāra). But, the natural formation of the human Mind is such that man finds it extremely difficult, or almost impossible, to love or to make his mind uniform, by meditation and concentration, with an object from even among the qualityful objects, which is imperceptible, that is, which, having no definite form, smell, etc., is, on that account, not cognisable by the organs. Because, as the Mind is naturally restless, it cannot understand on what to concentrate itself, unless it has before itself, by way of support, some steady object, which is perceptible to the organs. If this mental act of concentration is found difficult even by Jñānins. how much more so then by ordinary people? Therefore, just as in teaching Geometry one has to draw on a slate or on a board, by way of sample, a small portion of a line, in order to impress on the Mind the nature of a straight line,

which, though in itself eternal, endless, and breadthless. that is to say. imperceptible, is yet qualityful, because it possesses the quality of length, so also, ordinary people at least have got to keep before the mind, some perceptible object, which has a 'pratyakṣa' (visible) Name and Form, in order that they

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should acquire affection for and make their minds uniform with the Parameśvara, Who is the cause of everything, omnipotent, and omniscient, that is to say, qualityful, but who is yet formless, that is to say, imperceptible (avyakta). [1] Nay, unless some perceptible thing has been seen, the human mind cannot conceive the idea of the Imperceptible, For instance, it is only after one has seen by one's own eyes the perceptible colours red, green etc., that the common and imperceptible idea of 'colour' comes into existence in the human mind, and

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[1] In this matter, the following stanza is mentioned as being from the Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha:

akṣarāvagamalabdhaye yathā sthūlavartula-dṛṣatparigrahaḥ |

śuddhabuddhaparilabdhaye tathā dāru-mṛṇmayaiśilāmayrācanam ||

that is, "as pieces of stone are arranged (before a child), in order to acquaint it with letters, so are idols of wood, or earth, or stone taken, in order to acquire knowledge of the pure and knowledgeable Parabrahman". This stanza, however, is not to be found in the Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha.

not otherwise. You may call this the natural quality or the defect of the human mind. Whatever may be the case, so long as the embodied human being cannot get rid of this mental quality, there is no other way except to descend from the Qualityless into the Qualityful, and into the Perceptible Qualityful rather than the Imperceptible Qualityful, for purposes of Worship (upāsanā) or Devotion (bhakti). Therefore, the path of worshipping the Perceptible, has been in vogue since times immemorial, and ultimately in Upaniṣads like the Rāma-tāpanīya and others, the worship of the perceptible form of the Brahman, in the shape of human beings, is mentioned; and in the Bhagavadgītā also, this doctrine has been reiterated in the following logical form:—

kleśo 'dhikataras teṣāṁ avyaktāsaktacetasām ।

avyaktā hi gatir duḥkhaṁ dehavadbhir avāpyate ॥ (Gī.  
12.5).

that is, "that man who wishes to concentrate his Mind (citta) on the Imperceptible (avyakta), suffers much; because, to the

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human being, clothed in a body and organs, it is inherently difficult to reach this state of the Imperceptible". This path of 'visible experience' is known as the "Path of Devotion". When once the form of the Parabrahman has been, defined by

means of the Intelligence, concentrating the mind on Its imperceptible form by means of thought, will be possible- for an intelligent person; not that it is impossible; but in as much as this act of attaching the 'Mind' on the Imperceptible, has to be accomplished by the help of Faith or Affection, one does not escape the necessity of Faith and Affection in this path. Therefore, from the philosophical point of view, even- the worship of the saccidānanda Brahman (the Brahman which: is eternal, conscious, and joyful), must be included in the Path of Devotion, which is founded on Love. Nevertheless, as the form of the Brahman, which is taken for purposes of meditation in this path, is essentially imperceptible, and is accessible only to the Reason, that is, only to Jñāna, and is the most important factor, it is usual not to refer to this path as the Path of Devotion, but as Contemplation of the Absolute Self, (adhyātma-vicāra), the Worship of the Imperceptible (avyaktopāsanā) or simply Worship (upāsanā), or the PATH OF KNOWLEDGE; and although the Brahman which is worshipped is required to be qualityful, yet, if one takes a perceptible, instead of an imperceptible form, and especially a human form, for worship, that makes it the PATH OF DEVOTION. But, it will be clearly seen, that (i) though the paths may be two, yet since one attains the same Paramēśvara, and ultimately acquires Equability of Reason by either path, these two paths are eternal stair-cases for rising to the same floor, which are used by different persons according to their respective qualifications; and that (ii) the ideals do not become different



because the paths are different. Out of these, the first step of the one staircase is Intelligence, whereas the first step of the other staircase is Faith and Love; and whichever path is followed, the man acquires the same kind of Realisation of the same Parameśvara, and attains the same Release, Therefore, the doctrine that, "there is no salvation unless it is based on actually experienced Knowledge", is common to both the paths. Then, where is the sense of entering into the futile discussion

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as to whether the Path of Knowledge is superior or the Path of Devotion is superior? Though these two paths are at first different having regard to the qualification of the man, they are ultimately of the same value in effect, and are both called 'Adhyātma' (the Philosophy of the Absolute Self) in the Gītā (Gī. 11.1). But although Knowledge and Devotion are of the same value as means (sādhana), yet, there is this important difference between the two, that whereas Devotion can never become a Niṣṭhā, Knowledge can become a Niṣṭhā, that is, the highest stage in the State of Perfection (siddhāvasthā). It is true that one can get the same Knowledge of the Parameśvaram. by means of Devotion, as by means of the Contemplation of the Absolute Self, or the Worship of the Imperceptible (Gī. 18.55); but if, after having acquired this Knowledge,. the man gives up worldly life and remains steeped

in the Knowledge, the Gītā calls him a 'Jñāna-niṣṭhā' and not a 'Bhakti-niṣṭhā.' As the process of Devotion is based on the duality of the worshipper and the worshipped, no Devotion or any other kind of worship survives in the ultimate state of the merger of the Ātman into Brahman. The ultimate resolution of Devotion is into Knowledge; Devotion is a means for acquiring Knowledge, it is not a goal in itself. In short, Knowledge becomes a means, as meaning the worship of the Imperceptible; whereas, it becomes a Niṣṭhā, that is, an ultimate state, as meaning the direct Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman; and when it is necessary to make this difference clear, the two words 'Jñāna-mārga' and 'Jñāna-niṣṭhā' are not used synonymously, but the word 'Jñāna-mārga' is used to indicate the worship of the Imperceptible in its preparatory stages, and the word 'Jñāna-niṣṭhā' is used to indicate the State of Perfection (siddhāvasthā), which consists of giving up all Action after Acquisition of Knowledge, and becoming engrossed in Knowledge. That is to say, Jñāna once becomes a means (Jñāna-mārga), in the sense of the Worship of the Imperceptible (avyaktopāsanā), or the Meditation on the Absolute Self (adhyātma-vicāra); and it becomes a Niṣṭhā, that is to say, the ultimate state of Abandonment of Action, in the sense of a Direct Realisation (aparokṣānubhava); and the

same is the case with Karma. That Karma (Action) which has to be initially performed according to the limits laid down by the Śāstras for the purification of the Mind is a means (sādhana). By this Karma, the Mind becomes purified and Knowledge and Peace are ultimately acquired; but when, instead of remaining steeped in this Knowledge, the man continues to perform Desireless Action peacefully, so long as life lasts, this Desireless Action combined with Knowledge is a Karma which becomes a Niṣṭhā, (Gī. 3.3). But, the same is not the case with Devotion. Devotion is only a path, that is to say, it is a means of acquiring Knowledge; it is not a Niṣṭhā. Therefore, in the beginning of the Gītā, only the two Niṣṭhās of Jñāna (Sāṃkhya) and Yoga (Karma) have been dealt with; and in mentioning the various means, ways, ritual, or paths of acquiring the Karma-Yoga-Niṣṭhā, out of the two (Gī. 7.1), the Gītā has described the two sister paths of the Worship of the Imperceptible (Jñāna-mārga) and the Worship of the Perceptible (Bhakti-mārga), which have been in vogue from times immemorial, and states that the Worship of the Imperceptible out of the two is fraught with difficulty, whereas the Worship of the Perceptible, or Devotion, is a path which is easier, that is, is such as can be followed by everybody; or as Tukārāma has said:— "if you want to reach the Parameśvara; then this is the easier path || " (Gā. 3002). The ancient Upaniṣads deal with the Jñāna-mārga (the Path of Knowledge) and the Śāṇḍilya-Sūtra and other Sūtras or the Bhāgavata, and other works, praise the Path of Devotion; but no ancient religious treatise is seen to have differentiated

between the Jñāna-mārga and the Bhakti-mārga as two paths, according to the qualification of the person, and to have ultimately harmonised both of them with the Path of Desireless Action, as has been impartially done in the Gītā.

If one considers, as mentioned above, what should be done by man, who is embodied in a Body and organs, in order to acquire the true and self-experienced Knowledge of the form of the Īśvara, to the effect that there is only one Parameśvara in all created beings, one comes to the conclusions that, (i) although the eternal, inexpressible, and unimaginable form of the Parameśvara, which can be described only by the

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words " It is not this, It is not this " ('neti, neti'), is the most superior form, yet, as it is QUALITYLESS, UNKNOWABLE, AND IMPERCEPTIBLE, the Dualistic difference of the worshipper and the worshipped does not remain any more when it has been Realised; that, (ii) therefore, worship (upāsanā) cannot start with that form; that, (iii) that form is something which is to be reached, and not the means of reaching it; and 'that, (iv) worship (upāsanā) is a means for acquiring the Non- Dualistic state of becoming uniform with that form. Therefore, that object which has to be taken for this worship, has necessarily to be a qualityful object. The all-knowing, omnipotent, all-

pervading, and uncircumscribed form of the Brahman is such a form, that is, a QUALITYFUL form. But, as such a form is ACCESSIBLE ONLY TO THE INTELLIGENCE, AND IMPERCEPTIBLE, that is, not perceptible to the organs, it is a difficult form for purposes of worship. Therefore, in all religions, man is seen to naturally adopt for purposes of 'Devotion', in preference to both these forms, that sympathetic and easily accessible QUALITYFUL, LOVE-EARNED, PERCEPTIBLE, and VISIBLE Parameśvara, Who, notwithstanding that He is the unimaginable, omnipresent, all-pervading, and all-powerful Self of the whole world, will yet speak with us, love us, place us on the path of righteousness, and lead us to a happy state; Whom we can call our own; Who will be sympathetic towards our pain and happiness, and forgive our sins; with reference to Whom we can establish the direct relation that He is ours, and we are His; Who will protect us like a father; Who will be a mother to us; or Who will be " gatir bhartā prabhuḥ sākṣī nivāsaḥ śaraṇam suhṛt" (Gī. 9.17 and 18), i.e., "our goal, our maintainer, our owner, our companion, our home of protection and rest, our ultimate support and hope, our friend and our protector"; and Whom we can, on that account, realise by love and caressingly; and Who is truthful, endowed with all glory, the ocean of kindness, the lover of His devotees, the holy of holies, the height of magnanimity, the height of kindness, the most revered, the height of beauty, and the home of all qualities. These two last kinds of the form of the fundamentally unimaginable and 'one only, without a second'

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Parabrahman, which are visible to man by means of the mental spectacles of Love, Devotion, etc., are, in Vedānta philosophy, given the technical name of 'Īśvara.' If the Parameśvara is all-pervading, why has Pāṇḍuraṅga or Viṭhobā, a diminutive form? To this question, the answer given by; Tukārāma is:-

Tukā says that although the Hari is  
all-pervading and only one;  
He has become small for purposes of Devotion (Gā.  
38.7);

and the same doctrine has been expounded in the Vedānta-Sūtras (1.2.7). Even the Upaniṣads, in describing the worship of the Brahman, do not mention only, Life, Mind, and other qualityful, but purely imperceptible things, but they at the same time mention the worship of qualityful, perceptible objects like the Sun (āditya) or the food, etc. (Tai. 3.26; Chān. 7); and in the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad, after describing the 'Īśvara' as: "māyāṁ tu prakṛtiṁ vidyāt māyinaṁ tu maheśvaram" (Śve. 4.10), that is, "Māyā is the name given to Matter (prakṛti), and the Lord of this Māyā is the highest Īśvara (maheśvara)", the qualityful Īśvara is further described as: "jñātvā devaṁ mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ", that is, " by knowing this god (dew), one becomes free from all bonds" (Śve. 4.16) – which is more

or less the same as in the Gītā. The Name-d and Form-ed object necessary for purposes of worship as the symbol, sign, incarnation, particle, or representation of the worshipped Parabrahman, is known in Vedānta philosophy as a 'pratīka'. The etymological meaning of 'pratīka', is prati + ika, that is, 'one, who is turned, towards (prati) ourselves'; and that side or portion of any particular object, which first becomes perceptible to us, and whereby we subsequently obtain a knowledge of it, is called 'pratīka'. According to this meaning, any perceptible side, part, or particular incarnation of the all-pervading Paramēśvara can become a 'pratīka' for acquiring His Knowledge. For instance, in the conversation between the Brahmin and the Vyādha (hunter), the Vyādha, after explaining the Knowledge of the Absolute Self to the Brahmin, says in the end: "pratyakṣaṁ mama yo dharmas taṁ ca paśya dvijottama" (Vana. 213. 3), i.e., "O most

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excellent among Brahmins, now see my visible religion"; and he then takes the Brahmin to his aged parents and says, "these are my 'visible deities', and serving them with all my heart and soul, as if they are the Paramēśvara, is my 'visible' (pratyakṣa) religion"; and even in the Gītā, the Blessed Lord has, before mentioning the worship of His perceptible form, said with the same object, that this Path of Devotion is:

rājavidyā rājaguhyaṁ pavitram idam uttamam ।  
pratyakṣāvagamam dharmyaṁ susukhaṁ kartum  
avyayam ॥ (Gī. 9.2),

that is, "the most superior among all Vidyās and all mysticisms, (rāja-vidyā and rāja-guhya), excellent, sacred, literally VISIBLE, consistent with Religion, easily observable, and inexhaustible". The two compound words 'rāja-vidyā,' and 'rāja-guhya' are analysed as: 'vidyānām rāja' (sovereign of all cults) and 'guhyanām rāja' (the sovereign among all mysticisms); and in forming the compound, the word 'rāja' is placed first according to the rules of Sanskrit grammar. But instead of this, some people analyse the word 'rāja-vidyā' as 'rājñām vidyā' (the cult of kings), and say that, when in ancient times Ṛṣis (ascetics) used to explain the Brahma- Vidya to kings, as stated in the Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha (Yo. 2.11. 16 – 18), this Brahma-Vidyā or Knowledge of the Absolute Self came to acquire the names of 'rāja-vidyā and 'rāja-guhya'; and that therefore, the Gītā must be taken to have used these two words in the same meaning, that is, as meaning not Devotion, but the Knowledge of the Absolute Self. As the path mentioned in the Gītā was traditionally followed by kings, such as, Manu, Ikṣvāku etc., (Gī. 4.1), one cannot definitely say that the words 'rāja-vidyā' and 'rāja-guhya' have not been used in "the Gītā in the meaning of 'the cult of kings' or the 'mysticism of kings', that is to say, the cult or the mysticism, which was accepted by kings (rājāmānya). But, if these meanings are accepted, it has still to be



borne in mind that they have not been used in the present context with reference to the Path of Knowledge; because this chapter of the Gītā in which this stanza appears is, on the whole, in support of the Path of Devotion (See Gī. 9.22 – 31); and although the Brahman to be

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reached may be the game, yet, in as much as it is clearly stated in the Gītā itself (Gī. 12.5), that the Jñāna-mārga to be followed as a means, in the philosophy of the Absolute Self, is 'accessible only to the Intelligence' (buddhigamyā), and therefore 'imperceptible' (avyakta) and 'difficult' (duḥkha-kāraṇa), it is not likely that the Blessed Lord can now refer to that same path as 'pratyakṣāvagamam', that is, 'perceptible', and 'kartuṃ susukham' (easy to follow). It, therefore, follows, on the ground of consistency in the subject-matter of the chapter, as also on the ground of the appropriateness of the words 'pratyakṣāvagamam' and 'kartuṃ susukham', which can apply wholly and on all fours to the Path of Devotion, that the word 'rāja-vidyā' in this context indicates only the Path of Devotion. The word 'vidyā' does not indicate only 'the Knowledge of the Brahman'; and it has been used in the Upaniṣads to indicate 'the means or oaths by which that Knowledge can be acquired', e. g., Śāṇḍilya-Vidyā, Prāṇa-Vidyā, Hārda-Vidyā, etc.; and all such various Vidyās, or paths, which have been mentioned in the Upaniṣads, have been considered

in the third section of the third chapter of the Vedānta-Sūtras. It also appears from the Upaniṣads, that these Vidyās were kept secret, and that in ancient times they used to be taught to no one except one's disciples. Therefore, whatever the Vidya was, it was bound to be mystic (guhya). But, although these various mystic Vidyās or paths, which were a means for the Acquisition of the Brahman, were many, yet, among all of these means, the Vidya in the shape of the Path of Devotion mentioned in the Gītā, was the highest ('guhyanām vidyānām ca rājā', i.e., the king of mysticisms and Vidyās ~Translator.); because, this path is not 'avyakta' (imperceptible) like the Vidyā in the Jñāna-mārga, but is actually visible to the eyes, and, on that account, easy to follow. This is how I read that stanza. If the Gītā had supported only the Path of Knowledge, which is accessible only to the Intelligence, it is doubtful, whether all the sects of the Vedic Religion would have clung, to this treatise, as has been done by them during the last hundreds of years. The sweetness, affectionateness, and. charm, which permeates the Gītā is due to its having propounded the Path of Devotion. The Blessed Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa,

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who was the living incarnation of the Parameśvara, was, in the first place, the person who sung the Gītā; and further, instead of preaching the barren Knowledge of the unknowable Parabrahman, the Blessed Lord has given advice in the Gītā to

Arjuna in different places like: "everything is invested in ME " (7.7); " all this is MY Māyā " (7.14); "there is nothing which is different from ME" (7.7); "to ME friends and enemies are alike" (9.29); "I have created this universe " (9.4); and ultimately, "I am the root of the Brahman and of Release" (14.27); or "I am the Puruṣottama" (15.18); and therefore, "give up all other religions and worship only ME, I will redeem you from all sins, do not be afraid" (18. 66) which is advice, which refers in the first person to His qualityful and perceptible form. On this account, the hearer gets the feeling that he is actually standing before a living, equal-visioned, extremely affectionate, and most reverential Puruṣottama; and his Niṣṭha becomes fired on the Knowledge of the Ātman. But this is not all; for, instead of dividing the chapters severally between Jñāna on the one hand, and Devotion on the other, Jñāna is amalgamated with Devotion, and Devotion is amalgamated with Jñāna, so that there is no- mutual conflict between Knowledge and Devotion, or between Intelligence and Love; and one experiences the sweetness of the Knowledge of the Parameśvara, while at the same time acquiring that Knowledge; and the feeling of Self-Identification with all living beings being aroused in the Mind, it acquires the most wonderful peace and the bliss of content, The Karma-Yoga is further tacked on to this, like adding sugar to milk; then, what is the wonder that our philosophers have laid down the proposition that the Knowledge expounded in the Gita is,

as is said in the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad, beneficial both in 'mṛtyu' and 'amṛta', that is, both in this world and the. next?

From what has been stated above, my readers will have understood what is meant by the Path of Devotion, what is the similarity and the dissimilarity between the Path of Knowledge and the Path of Devotion, why the Path of Devotion is called the royal path (the royal Vidyā) or the easy ladder, and also why, the Path of Devotion has not been referred to as an

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independent Niṣṭhā in the Gītā. But, it is now necessary to point out a position of danger, which exists in this easy, long-standing, and visible path of acquiring Knowledge; otherwise, there is a chance that an unwary wayfarer along the road may fall into that pit. This pit-fall has been clearly defined in the Bhagavadgītā, and that is the important point of difference between the Vedic Path of Devotion and other paths of Devotion, Although it is generally accepted that, in order that the human Mind should become attached to the Para-brahman, and that a man should acquire an equable 'Reason by means of the purification of the Mind, there must be some qualityful and perceptible object as a symbol (pratīka) of the Parabrahman in front of the Devotee, and that otherwise, the Mind cannot become steady, yet, as will be clear from history,

there are grave disputes about what that symbol should be. From the Metaphysical point of view, there is no place in the world where the Parameśvara does not exist; and even in the Bhagavadgītā, after Arjuna had asked Śrī Kṛṣṇa the following question, namely, "tell me which various objects I should meditate on, as being Your Manifestations" (Gī. 10.18), the Blessed Lord has, in the tenth chapter, mentioned the Mind out of all organs, the Himalayas out of all immoveables, the Yajña by way of repetition of prayers out of all Yajñas, Vāsuki among the serpents, Prahlāda among the demons, Aryamā among the ancestors, Citraratha among the Gandharvas, the pipal-tree out of all trees, the eagle among the birds, Bhṛgu out of the great Ṛṣis, the letter 'A' out of all letters, and Viṣṇu out of all the various Suns, as being the numerous forms of Himself, which fill the moveable and the immoveable world on all sides; and He has ultimately said:—

yad yad vibhūtimat sattvaṁ śrīmad ūrjitam eva vā ।  
tat tad evāvagaccha tvaṁ mama tejomśasaṁbhavam ॥  
(Gī. 10.41).

that is, "O, Arjuna understand that all things which are possessed of excellence, wealth, or prowess, are created from a part of My effulgence; what more shall I say? I have pervaded the whole of this universe by only a part of Myself"; and He has given to Arjuna an actual experience of this

proposition, by showing to him His Cosmic Form in the next chapter. If all the things or qualities to be seen in the world are only forms or symbols of the Parameśvara, how can one say that the Blessed Lord is in one of them and not in another; and who is going to say it? It becomes logically necessary to say that He is near and yet afar; existent and yet non-existent, also beyond both; the eagle, as also the serpent; the death, as also the one who dies; the one who creates obstacles, and the one who removes them; the one who creates fear, and . one who removes it; the terrible and yet the not-terrible; the pleasant and yet the unpleasant; the one who causes the rain, and the one who prevents rain from falling (Gī. 9.19 and 10.32); and Tukārāma Buvā, a devotee of the Blessed Lord, has with the same import said:—

Tukā says whatever name you give;

such name is proper for this Viṭhṭhala || (Tu. Gā.  
3065.4).

If everything in this world is in the same way in part a form of the Parameśvara, why should not such persons as cannot at a stroke grasp this all-pervasive form of the Parameśvara, take for worship, in the beginning, any one of these numerous things, as a means or a symbol for Realising this .imperceptible and pure form? Some may worship the Mind, others may perform the Yajña of wealth, others again the Yajña of prayer, some may worship the eagle, others may worship only the

Sacred symbol 'OM', some may worship Viṣṇu and others Śiva, some may worship Gaṇapati, and -others Bhavani, some again may look upon their parents as the Parameśvara and serve them, whereas others might choose for worship a form which is much more comprehensive, such as the Virāṭa form made up of all created beings. One may prescribe the worship of the Sun, whereas others may say that Śrī Kṛṣṇa or Śrī Rāmacandra is better than the Sun. But, as the idea that all these Forms are fundamentally one and the same, has been lost sight of, as a result of Ignorance or Delusion, or as it is not to be found at all in some religions, a false arrogance sometimes arises as to the relative merits of these objects of, worship, and matters come to physical

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violence. If one for the moment keeps out of consideration! the mutual conflicts between the Vedic, Buddhistic, Jain, Christian, or Mahomedan religions, the history of Europe- shows us that matters had come to the point of the worshippers of one and the same qualityful and perceptible Christ, murdering each other, as a result of difference in ritualistic practices; and quarrels are even now going on among the worshippers of the Qualityful, on the ground that the deity worshipped by one is better than the deity worshipped by another, because the former is Formless, and the latter has a Form. Unless one explains whether there is a

way for bringing these quarrels arising in the Path of Devotion to a close, and if so, which that way is, the Path of devotion does, not become free from danger; and we shall, therefore, consider what the reply of the Gītā to that question is. I need not say that in the present state of India, it is of special importance to give a proper answer to this question.

The methods of contemplating in the first place, or placing before one's eyes as a symbol, the form of any one of the numerous qualityful Manifestations of the Parameśvara, in order to acquire Equability of Reason by steadying the Mind, have been described in the ancient Upaniṣads; and ultimately in the later Upaniṣads like the Rāma-Tāpanī, or the Gītā, the unlimited and concentrated worship of a human-formed, qualityful Parameśvara has been considered as the principal means of reaching the Parameśvara. But, although the worship of Vasudeva has been given an important position in the Gītā, in so far as it is a means to an end, yet considering the matter from the Metaphysical point of view, it has been stated in the Vedānta-Sūtras (Ve. Sū. 4.1.4), as also further on in the Gītā itself, that a symbol (pratīka) is only a kind of means, and that the true all-pervading and permanent Parameśvara cannot be limited to any one of these symbols. What more shall I say? Whatever qualityful, that is, Name-d and Form-ed perceptible object is taken, it is nothing but Māyā, and he who wishes to see the true Parameśvara, must ultimately extend his vision beyond such qualityful forms. It is clear that no manifestation,



out of the many manifestations of the Parameśvara, can be more

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comprehensive than the Cosmic Form which was shown by the- Blessed Lord to Arjuna; yet, after this same Cosmic Form had been shown by the Blessed Lord to Nārada, He has said, "this form which you see is not My true form, this is only a Māyā; and in order to see My real form, you must go beyond this Māyā" (see Nārāyaṇīya dharma, Śān. 339.44); and even in the Gītā, the Blessed Lord has clearly given to Arjuna the advice that:—

avyaktaṁ vyaktim āpannam manyante mām

abuddhayaḥ ।

param bhāvam ajānanto mamāvyayam anuttamam ॥

(Gī. 7.24),

that is, "although I am imperceptible, ignorant people call Me perceptible, or endowed with a human form (Gī. 9.1); but that is not My true form; My imperceptible form is My true form". Also, although the Upaniṣads prescribe the Mind, the Speech, the Sun, Ether, and numerous other perceptible and imperceptible symbols of the Brahman for purposes of worship, yet, it is ultimately clearly stated, that that which is

accessible to the eyes, or the speech, or the ears, is not the true Brahman, but:

yan manasā na manute yenā 'hur mano matam ।  
tad eva brahma tvam viddhi nedaṁ yad idam upāsate ॥  
(Kena. 1.5 – 8).

that is " That, which cannot be meditated on by the Mind, but on the contrary, the power of meditation of Which includes- the Mind, is the true Brahman; that which is worshipped (as a 'pratīka', i.e., symbol) is not the (true) Brahman "; and the same meaning is conveyed by the canon (sūtra) "neti, neti". Take the Mind, or Ether (ākāśa), or according to the path of the worship of the Perceptible, take the Śāligrāma, or the Śivaliṅga, or the tangible form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or of some Saint, or take a temple which contains a stone or a metal idol of a god, or a masjid or a temple which contains no idol; all these are mere means for steadying the Mind, that is, for fixing the Mind on the Parameśvara, like the go-carts of little children. However much these symbols, taken by different persons according to their own liking or according to their respective spiritual qualifications, may be loved by them, like the go-carts

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of children, which are simple or coloured, or of sandal-wood, or to which a tambourine or a jingling bell is attached, yet, one

must realise that the true Parameśvara is 'not in these symbols' – 'na pratīke na hi saḥ' (Ve. Sū. 4.1.4), but is beyond them; and for the same reason, is the proposition laid down in the Bhagavadgītā that: "those ignorant persons, who do not understand My Māyā, do not Realise Me" (Gī. 7.13 – 15).

The power of redemption which is contained in the Path of Devotion is not a power possessed by some living or lifeless image, or by a building of brick and mortar; but that belief, which every worshipper for his own convenience holds with reference to such image, to the effect that it is the Īśvara, is the thing which really redeems. Let the symbol be of stone, or of metal, or of anything else, it can never be worth more than what it really is. Whatever may be your faith with reference to the symbol, it is the fruit of your Devotion, which the Parameśvara – not the symbol – gives you. Then, where is the sense of fighting that the symbol chosen by oneself is better than the one chosen by another? If your faith is not pure, then, however good the symbol may be, what is the use of it? If the whole day you are engaged in deceiving others, then, it will be impossible for you to attain the Parameśvara, notwithstanding that you go to worship an idol in a temple, or go for worship in some temple which does not contain any image, and whether every morning and evening, or on feast days. Śrī Samartha has described persons who go into temples for listening to sermons (purāṇa) in the following terms:–

Sensual persons go to the temple for listening to the sermons;

but their eyes are fixed on the ladies who are present;  
At the same time, those who have come with the  
intention of stealing;  
steal your shoes and go away || [1]

(Dāsa. 18.10.26). If idols of deities or temples had any  
redeeming power in themselves, then even such sensual  
persons or thieves must attain .Release. Some people believe  
that Devotion to the

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Parameśvara is only for the purposes of Release; but those  
persons who wish to obtain some Material or selfish object,  
must demote themselves to the worship of different deities;  
and it is said in the Gītā itself that such persons run after these  
deities, with such selfish motives (Gī. 7.20). But the Gītā itself  
says later on, that the idea that these deities, of their own  
accord, give you the reward of the worship is philosophically  
incorrect (Gī. 7.21). It is a definite doctrine of the Philosophy of  
the Absolute Self, that whichever deities you worship with  
whatever desire in your heart, giving the fruit of that worship  
is not in the hands of that deity, but of the all-pervading  
Parameśvara (Ve. Sū. 3.2.38 – 41); and the same doctrine has  
been accepted by the Gītā (Gī. 7.22). But, though the

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[1] It is usual in India to leave one's shoes outside the temple when one  
enters it for worship, and that is how the shoes are stolen. ~Translator.

Parameśvara Who gives the reward may, in this way, be One, yet, as He gives a different reward to each one according to his good or evil intentions (Ve. Sū. 2.1.34 – 37), the results of the worship of different symbols or deities are seen to be different from each other; and it is with this import in mind, that the Blessed Lord has said in one place:

śraddhāmayo 'yaṁ puruṣo yo yacchraddhaḥ sa eva saḥ |  
(Gī. 17.3; Maitryu. 4.6),

that is, "man is governed by Faith; whatever may be the symbol which is taken, as his Faith, so does the man become"; and in another place:–

yānti devavratā devān piṭṛn yānti piṭṛvratāḥ |  
bhūtāni yānti bhūtejā yānti madyājīnopi mām || (Gī.  
9.25).

that is, "those who worship deities, reach the sphere of the deities; those who worship ancestors, the sphere of ancestors; those who worship the departed, reach that of the dead; and those who worship Me, reach Me"; or again in a third place:–

ye yathā mām prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy  
aham | (Gī. 4.11).

that is, "in that way, in which people are devoted to Me, in the same way, am I devoted to them". The Śāligrāma is only a stone. If you entertain the faith with reference to it that it is Viṣṇu, you will reach the sphere of Viṣṇu; if you worship the same symbol believing that it is some past being like a Yakṣa,

or a demon, etc., you will reach the spheres of past beings like a Yakṣa or a demon, etc. All our philosophers have accepted the doctrine that the fruit is of your Faith, and not of the symbol; and the same is the reason for the ordinary practice of instilling life into an image (making a prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā) before taking the image for worship. That deity, which is believed to inhabit any particular image, in worshipping that image, is the deity of which a prāṇa-pratiṣṭhā is made in that image. No one worships any image without believing that it is inhabited by the Parameśvara; that is, merely believing that it is earth, or stone, or metal, having some particular form; and if any one worships it in that way, Then, the man will undoubtedly reach the state of the earth, or the stone, or the metal, according to the above-mentioned doctrine enunciated by the Gītā. When in this way a difference has been made between the symbol, and the Faith with which that symbol is worshipped, no reason remains for quarrelling about the symbol, whatever that symbol may be; because, the idea that the symbol is the god or Parameśvara, no more remains. That omnipresent Parameśvara, Who gives the reward for all Actions, looks only to the Faith of the devotees. Therefore, Tukārāma has said that the 'Parameśvara takes into account -only the Faith', and not the symbol which is worshipped. Those persons who have realised this principle of the Path of Devotion, do not

obstinately insist that "that form of the Īśvara or the symbol which I worship, is the only true symbol, and that other symbols are false"; but he has the charitable feeling, that whatever may be the symbol which is taken, all -those who worship the Parameśvara through that symbol, reach one and the same Parameśvara; and then he realises the truth of the statement of the Blessed Lord that:—

ye 'py anyadevatābhaktā yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ ।  
te 'pi mām eva kaunteya yajanty avidhipūrvakam ॥ (Gī.  
9.23),

that is, "although the ritual, or the external routine, or the means employed, may not be such as have been enjoined by the Śāstras, yet, those who worship a deity with Faith (that is, believing that the pure Parameśvara is in that deity)

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worship (indirectly) only Me". The same meaning has been conveyed in the Bhāgavata, with a slight verbal difference (Bhāg. 10. Pū. 40.8 – 10); and in the Śivagītā the above stanza has been taken word for word (Śiva. 12.4); and the same is the meaning of the statement in the Vedas that: "ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanti" (that is, "the one Reality is given various names by learned people" ~Translator.), (Ṛg. 1.164.46), From this it becomes clear, that this principle has been in vogue in

the Vedic Religion from very ancient times; and the fact 'that in modern times, the fault of intolerance of other religions was not to be found in a man of prowess like Śrī Śivājī Mahārāja, who was a believer in the Vedic Religion, even when he was at the height of his power, is due to this principle. That men should not realise the true principle that the Īśvara is all-pervading, omnipresent, omniscient, -omnipotent, and possibly even beyond all that, that is to say, unimaginable; that they should entertain a false pride about a .Name and Form, and insist that the particular perceptible form -which was taken up by the Parameśvara at a particular time, or in any particular place, by being born from particular parents, in any particular caste, with a particular Name and Form, is the only true form of the Parameśvara; and that they should, on that account, come to the stage of cutting each other's throats with a sword, is a proof of the most regrettable stupidity of men. It is true that the Path of Devotion mentioned in the Gītā is called a 'rāja-vidyā'. But, if one considers in which country there have been first born any religious preachers who have irradiated false begotisms in the Path of Devotion (i) by preaching, that: "My visible form is only a Māyā, if you wish to see My true Form, transcend that Māyā and go beyond", as was done by the Blessed Lord, or (ii) by Realising the unity of all religions by means of the sāttvika knowledge-full vision of "avibhaktaṁ vibhakteṣu" (i.e., "the unity in the division" ~Translator.); or, if one considers which country contains the largest number of followers of their opinion, I must say that



the first place has to be given to this our India, When this philosopher's stone of a 'rāja-vidyā' and of a 'rāja-guhya' is in our hands, it is certainly a matter of great misfortune that some of us should put on our eyes the

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spectacles of ignorance, and say that that philosopher's stone is nothing hut a flint!

It is thus true, that whatever symbol is taken, the result got by following the Path of Devotion is the result of the belief with which we invest that symbol, and not of the symbol; and that, therefore, it is useless to go on fighting about the symbol itself. But, now a doubt arises that that pure form of the Parameśvara with which the symbol has to be invested, can very often not be readily imagined by many people, on account of their inherent nature or their ignorance. Then, how is it possible for such persons to place absolute faith in the symbol and attain the Parameśvara? It is not enough to say that in the Path of Devotion, the work of Knowledge is done by Faith, and that one should imagine the pure form of the Parameśvara by confidence or by Religious Faith, and' invest the symbol with that belief; because, although holding a particular belief is a characteristic feature of the Mind, that is, of Faith, yet, one cannot do without supporting that Faith by

Intelligence, since, Faith and Love, like all other mental qualities, are by themselves to a certain extent blind, and they, by themselves, cannot understand to which object one should pin one's faith, and which not, or what one should love and what not. This question must be solved by everybody by his own Intelligence; because, there is no other organ except the Intelligence which can discriminate; and, therefore, though the Intelligence of a particular person might not be very keen, yet, it must be capable of, at any rate, determining on what things to pin his faith; otherwise, this blind Faith and this blind Love will both be deceived and 'fair into a pit-fall. On the contrary, if one exercises only his Intelligence without Faith, there is no saying what turn it will perversely take; for, the keener the Intelligence, the wilder will be its run. Besides, as has been stated by me already in the beginning of this chapter, mere Knowledge acquired by Intelligence is not capable of doing anything useful, unless it is supplemented by mental processes like Faith etc.; and therefore, Faith and Knowledge or Mind and Reason have always to be linked 'together. But, in as much as the Mind and the Reason are both manifestations of the three-

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-constituted Matter, each of them can from birth naturally fall into the three classes, sāttvika, rājasa, and tāmasa ; and though the combination of the Mind and the Reason be

permanent, the natures, beliefs, and Actions of different persons will differ in the proportion in which these will be more or less pure. If the Reason itself is from birth impure or rājasa or tāmasa , then, as the decision made by it as to a particular thing being good or bad will be wrong, blind Faith, though it may be sāttvika or pure, will notwithstanding be misguided; and, if the Faith is itself impure from birth, then, the fact that the Reason is sāttvika is useless; because, in these circumstances, the Faith will not listen to the dictates of the Reason. But, ordinarily the Mind and the Reason are not individually impure; and if the Reason of a man is inherently impure, his Mind, that is, his Faith, is also more or less impure; and in these circumstances, this impure Reason more and more confuses the inherently impure Faith. We find in ordinary life that in these circumstances, however much of advice may be given to a person about the pure form of the Parameśvara, such advice is not fully impressed on his Mind; or very often – and specially if the Faith and the Reason are both initially immature and weak – the man takes a perverse view of that advice itself. For instance, when Christian Missionaries begin to preach to the ebony-black Abyssinian in Africa about the Christian religion, he cannot by any means get a true idea of the Father in Heaven or of the Christian religion; and it has been observed that whatever is said to him, is imbibed by him in an incongruous meaning, according to his

immature Reason; and, therefore, as an English writer [1] has said, one must bring such persons to the state of a modern man, in order that they should be in a position to understand reformed religion. Although the preceptor may be the same, there is a difference

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between disciple and disciple; and Bhavabhūti means the same thing when he says that though the Sun may be one and the same, its light can cause fire by passing through a prism, but does not have the same effect on a clod of earth (U. Rāma. 2.4); and it would appear that it was principally for this Reason, that Śūdras and other ignorant classes were in ancient times looked upon as unfit for listening to the Vedas. [2] This subject-matter has been dealt with in the eighteenth chapter of the Gītā, and there, after stating that Reason is inherently of the three kinds, sāttvika, rājasa and tāmasa, (18.30 – 32), just as Faith is of those three kinds (17.2), the Blessed Lord has

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[1] "And the only way, I suppose, in which beings of so low an order of development (e. g., an Australian savage or a Bushman) could be raised to a civilised level of feeling and thought, would be by cultivation continued through several generations; they would have to undergo a gradual process of humanisation before they could attain to the capacity of civilisation ". Dr. Maudsley's Body and Mind. Ed. 1873, p. 57.

[2] See Max Müller's Three Lectures on the Vedānta Philosophy pp. 72 – 73.

stated that in as much as the Faith of different persons is in this way different from birth according to their respective bodily natures (17.3), sāttvika persons naturally put faith in deities, rājasa persons in Yakṣas and demons, and tāmasa persons put faith in ghosts and dead beings and spirits (Gī. 17.4 – 6). But, if the fact of a man having a pure and impure Faith depends in this way on his inherent nature, a question naturally arises as to whether or not this Faith will gradually get better, and sometime or other reach the absolutely pure, that is to say, the sāttvika state after Devotion has, in the first instance, been practised according to one's own qualification. The above difficulty in the Path of Devotion is of the same nature as the difficulty which arises in the subject of Cause and Effect, namely, whether or not a man is free to acquire Knowledge; and the reply to both is the same. That is why after having advised Arjuna in the beginning that "mayyeva mam ādhatsva" (Gī. 12.8), i.e., "concentrate your mind on My pure form", the Blessed Lord has later on explained the different paths of fixing the form of the Parameśvara in one's mind in the following words: "if you cannot concentrate your mind on Me, then practise doing so, that is, make a continual effort of doing so; and if you cannot perform that practice, then perform for My sake such Actions as will have the effect of purifying the Mind; and if you cannot do even that, then abandon the Fruit of Action, and thereby attain to Me" (Gī. 12.9 – 11; Bhāga. 11.11.21 – 25). If the inherent bodily

mature or prakṛti is tāmasa , the attempt of concentrating one's mind on the pure form of the Parameśvara, will not become successful at once or in one life. But as in the Karma-Yoga, so also in the Path of Devotion, nothing is wasted; and the Blessed Lord has given an assurance to everyone that:—

bahūnām janmanām ante jñānavān mām prapadyate ।  
vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ ॥ (Gī.  
7.19).

that is, "once a man has started on the Path of Devotion, then in the next birth, if not in this birth, he will acquire the true Knowledge of the form of the Parameśvara, to the effect that 'everything is pervaded by Vāsudeva'; and by the Acquisition of such Knowledge, he will ultimately attain Release". In the sixth chapter also, the Blessed Lord has said with reference to those who practise the Karma-Yoga that "anekajanmasamsiddhas tato yāti parām gatim" (6.45) – (i.e., "acquiring success, after many births, he reaches the most superior state" ~Translator.); and the same rule applies to the Path of Devotion. One should start by imagining as pure a form as it is possible for one to imagine, having regard to one's bodily nature, of that deity which one wishes to invest in the symbol. For some time, the Parameśvara (not the idol), gives you the reward of this conviction (7.22); but later on, there does not remain the necessity of any other means of purifying the mind, and ;this

continued Devotion to the Parameśvara, which is kept going according to one's spiritual qualification, results in this Faith being purified; and gradually the Realisation of the Parameśvara also goes on increasing, and ultimately the Mind acquires the belief that "vāsudevaḥ sarvaṁ" (i.e., "Vasudeva is everything" ~Translator.); and there no more remains any difference between the worshipper and the worshipped, and the Self ultimately becomes merged in the pure joy of the Brahman. All that is required is that the man should not give up his efforts; in short, the doctrine of the Gītā is, that in the same way as, the moment the man acquires the desire of practising the Karma-Yoga he is drawn towards complete perfection, as though he had been put into a grinding-mill (Gī. 6.44), so also, in the Path of Devotion, when once the Devotee has

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consigned himself to the Parameśvara, the Blessed Lord Himself gradually increases his Niṣṭhā, and makes him. ultimately fully realise His own form (Gī. 7.21; 10.10); and that by this Knowledge (not by barren or blind Faith) the Devotee of the Blessed Lord ultimately attains Release. This state, which is ultimately acquired by gradually rising in the Path of Devotion, being the same as the ultimate state acquired by the Path of Knowledge, the description which is given in the twelfth chapter of the Gītā of the ultimate state of the

Devotee, is absolutely the same as the description, given, in the second chapter, of the Sthitaprajña, as will be noticed by anybody who reads those descriptions. It follows from this, that though the Path of Knowledge and the Path of Devotion are different from each other in the beginning, and though some follow the one path, and others follow the other path according to their own qualifications, yet, both these paths ultimately come together, and the Devotee acquires the same state as is acquired by the Jñānin. The difference between these two paths is that in the Path of Knowledge, Knowledge is acquired from the very beginning by Reason; whereas, in the Path of Devotion, that same Knowledge is acquired by means of Faith. But, the Blessed Lord says that this initial difference disappears later on, and—

śraddhāvāṁl labhate jñānaṁ tatparaḥ saṁyatendriyaḥ

|

jñānaṁ labdhvā parāṁ śāntim acireṇādhigacchati ||

(Gī. 4.39).

that is, "if the man who is filled with Devotion pursues Knowledge by controlling the organs, he gets the practical personal experience of the Knowledge of the identity of the Ātman and the Brahman, and he soon thereafter acquires, complete Peace by means of such Knowledge"; or—

bhaktiā mām abhijānāti yāvān yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ |



tato mām tattvato jñātvā viśate tadanantaram || (Gī.  
18. 55).

that is, "by means of Devotion, one acquires the philosophical knowledge of who 'I', the Parameśvara, am, and how much I am; and after this Knowledge has been acquired (not before),

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"the Devotee comes to be merged in Me" (See Gī. 11.54). [1]  
There is no third way except these two ways for acquiring the fullest knowledge of the Parameśvara. Therefore, that man who does not possess in himself either Intelligence or Devotion, may, as has been stated further on in the Gītā itself, be considered as totally lost: "ajñāś cāśraddadhānaś ca saṁśayātmā vinaśyati" (Gī. 4.40).

To the doctrine that, by Faith and Devotion a man ultimately acquires a complete Realisation of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, some logicians have raised an objection to the following effect, namely: if the Path of Devotion starts with the

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[1] An attempt has been made in the Śāṅḍilya-Sūtra to show that Devotion is not a means of acquiring Knowledge, by emphasising the word 'abhi' in this stanza, and to show that it is an independent goal' to be acquired by itself (Sū. 15). But this meaning is a distorted meaning, like other doctrine-supporting interpretations; and is not a correct and straight-forward Interpretation.

Duality that the worshipper is different from the worshipped, how will the person ultimately realise the Non-Dualistic Knowledge of the identity of the Ātman and the Brahman? But this doubt is based on confusion of thought. If all that these objectors want to say, is that when once the Knowledge of that identity has been acquired, Devotion will, to that extent, come to an end, there is nothing wrong in that position; because, even Metaphysics accepts the position that when the trinity of the worshipper, the worshipped, and the worship, is at an end, that which we ordinarily call Devotion comes to an end. But, if this objection means that the Path of Devotion, which is based on Duality, can never lead to Non-Dualistic Knowledge, then this objection will be proved to be groundless, not only by logic, but also by the experience of well-known Devotees of the Blessed Lord. There is no objection, from the point of view of logic, to the position that the feeling of difference gradually disappears, as the Devotion towards the Parameśvara becomes more and more steady in the heart of the Devotee; because, even in the Brahman-world, there is no difficulty in the way of globules

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of mercury becoming unified later on, though they appear as separate entities in the beginning; and we see ourselves personally that the process of unification, in other matters also, starts with diversity; and it is a well-known illustration,

that a worm becomes a hornet by continually contemplating on a hornet. But, the actual experience of saints is a more convincing answer to this objection than mere logic; and among all these, I consider the practical experience of that king among Devotees, the saint Tukārāma, as of the utmost importance. No one need be told that the Knowledge of the Absolute Self (adhyātma), which had been acquired by^ the saint Tukārāma, had not been acquired by him by reading treatises like the Upaniṣads. Nevertheless,. in his Gatha, about 300 to 350 abhaṅga stanzas are devoted to the description of the state of Non-Duality; and in those stanzas, the doctrine of "vāsudevaḥ sarvam" (Gī. 7.19), (i.e., "Vāsudeva is everything" ~Translator.), or, as stated by Yājñavalkya in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad, "sarvam ātmaivābhūt" (i.e., everything has become identified with the Self ~Translator.), has been propounded, as being based on personal experience. For instance:—

As every part of jaggery is sweet;  
so has God come to be everywhere;  
Now whom shall I worship;  
God is inside as also outside.  
The film on the water  
is not separate from the water;  
Just as gold gets a name by being made into an  
ornament;  
Tukā says, so are we. (Gāthā. 3627)

The two first lines have been quoted by me in the chapter on the Philosophy of the Absolute Self (see p. 318 above ~Translator.); and I have shown there the complete similarity between the meaning conveyed by them and the Knowledge of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman expounded in the Upaniṣads. When the saint Tukārāma himself describes in this way the supreme state which is reached by the Devotee, as a matter of his own personal experience, it is strange that argumentative-

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people should dare to make such foolish assertions as: "it is not possible to acquire the Knowledge of Non-Dualism by the Path of Devotion", or, "one can attain Release by putting blind faith in the Parameśvara; Knowledge is not necessary for that purpose".

Not only do the propositions that, 'the ultimate ideal in the Path of Devotion and in the Path of Knowledge is the same' and that 'one ultimately attains Release by the experienced Realisation of the Parameśvara', remain unchanged in both these Paths, but all the other doctrines, which have been mentioned either in the chapter on the Absolute Self, or in the chapter on Cause and Effect, have been left untouched in the Path of Devotion mentioned in the Gītā. For example, some

persons maintain that according to the Bhāgavata religion, the universe was created in the following four-stepped way, namely, that Jīva in the form of the Saṁkarṣaṇa first came into being out of the Parameśvara in the form of Vasudeva; Pradyumna, that is, the Mind, sprang from Saṁkarṣaṇa; and Aniruddha, that is, Individuation, sprang from Pradyumna, thus making a 'caturvyūha' (i.e., four steps ~Translator.); whereas, there are others who believe that the true 'vyūha' of the creation was of only three, or two, out of these four steps, or of Vasudeva alone. It has been proved in the Vedānta-Sūtras on the authority of the Upaniṣads, that these ideas about the coming into existence of the Personal Self (jīva) are not correct, and that from the Metaphysical point of view, the Personal Self is an eternal portion of an eternal Parameśvara (Ve. Sū. 2.3.17; and 2.2.42 – 45). Therefore, the Bhagavadgītā has not accepted this idea of a four-stepped (caturvyūha) evolution as pertaining to the pure Path of Devotion, and has accepted the above-mentioned doctrine of the writers of the Vedānta-Sūtras with reference to the Personal Self (Gī. 2.24; 8.20; 13.22; and 15.7). In short, although the principles of the worship of Vasudeva and of Karma-Yoga have been adopted into the Gītā from the Bhāgavata religion, yet, it can be clearly seen that the Gītā has not countenanced any blind or foolish ideas about the form of the Personal Self in the shape of the Ātman (kṣetrajña) and of the Paramātmā, which are inconsistent with the Philosophy of

the Absolute Self. But, it must not be forgotten that, though the Gītā is so strong on establishing a complete harmony between Devotion and the Philosophy of the Absolute Self, or between Faith and Knowledge, yet, it becomes necessary to make minor verbal changes in the doctrines of the Philosophy of the Absolute Self in adopting them into the Path of Devotion; and that, that has been done in the Gītā. Some persons seem to have conceived the misunderstanding that as a result of these verbal differences between the Path of Knowledge and the Path of Devotion, there is a mutual conflict between the various doctrines, which are enunciated in the Gītā, once from the point of view of Devotion, and again from the point of view of Knowledge; and that there are inconsistencies, to that extent, in the Gītā, But, I am of opinion that these conflicts are not substantial, and that these doubts arise as a result of the doubters not having clearly understood the harmony which has been brought about by our philosophers between the Philosophy of the Absolute Self and Devotion. It is, therefore, necessary to deal in some detail with that matter here. As it is a doctrine of the Philosophy of the Absolute Self, that there is only Ātman in the Body and in the Cosmos, which (Ātman) has become clothed in a Name and Form, we say from the Metaphysical point of view that "sarvabhūtastham ātmānam sarvabhūtāni cātmani (Gī. 6.29), i.e., "that Ātman which is in Me, is also in all other created

beings", or again, "idaṁ sarvaṁ ātmaiva," i.e., "all this is the Ātman"; and the saint Tukārāma has with the same idea said:—"Tukā says, whatever I come across; I think that it is myself" (Gā. 4444.4). But, in the Path of Devotion, the imperceptible Paramātmā takes up the form of the perceptible Parameśvara; and therefore, we find in the chapter on Devotion in the Gītā, the following propositions, instead of the above-mentioned propositions, namely, such propositions as "yo māṁ paśyati sarvatra sarvaṁ ca mayi paśyati" (Gī. 6.29), i.e., "I (the Blessed Lord) am in all created beings, and all created beings are in Me"; or, "vāsudevaḥ sarvaṁ iti" (Gī. 7.19), i.e., "Whatever is, is full of Vasudeva;" or, "sarva bhūtāny aśeṣeṇa draśyasy ātmany atho mayi" (Gī. 4.35.), i.e., "When you have acquired Knowledge, you will see all created beings in Me, as also in

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yourself"; and for the same reason, the Devotee of the Blessed lord has been described as follows in the Bhāgavata-Purana:—

sarvabhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed bhagavadbhāvam ātmanaḥ |  
bhūtāni bhagavaty ātmany eṣā bhāgavatotlamaḥ ||  
(Bhāg. 11.2.45; and 3.24.46),

that is, "that Devotee, who does not entertain in his mind any such differentiation that I am something different, the Blessed Lord is something different, and all other people are something different, but who keeps in his mind the belief, with reference to all created beings, that he and the Blessed Lord are one .and the same, and who believes that all created beings subsist in the Blessed Lord as also in himself, is the most excellent amongst the Devotees of the Blessed Lord".

Nevertheless, it will be seen that the only change which has been made is, that we have substituted the words 'the perceptible Parameśvara' for the words 'the imperceptible Paramātmān' from the Philosophy of the Absolute Self. As the Paramātmān in the "Philosophy of the Absolute Self is imperceptible, the fact that "the entire universe is pervaded by the Ātman, has been proved in that philosophy by means of logic; but as the Path of Devotion is based on personal experience, the Blessed Lord has now described the numerous perceptible manifestations of the Parameśvara, and He has, by endowing Arjuna with super- natural sight, now given him a visible proof of the fact that the entire universe is pervaded by the Parameśvara, (pervaded by the Ātman), (Gī. chapters X and XI). In the Philosophy of the Absolute Self, He has stated that Karma is destroyed by Knowledge; but, as it is a doctrine of the Path of Devotion, that there is nothing else in the world except the qualityful Parameśvara, and that He is Himself Knowledge as also Action, the Knower as also the Doer, and the One who causes Action as also the one who gives the Fruit of Action,



there is now made no differentiation between different Actions (karma) such as, 'saṁcita', 'prārabdha', 'kriyamāṇa' etc.; and it is stated "that the One "Who gives the desire to perform the Action, as also the Fruit, and the One Who destroys the bondage of the Action, is the Parameśvara alone. For instance, the saint Tukārāma,

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imagining himself in solitude with the Parameśvara, lovingly but fearlessly asks Him' \_:

O, Pāṇḍuraṅga, listen to what I say;  
I have to say something to You in solitude;  
If I can be redeemed by my 'saṁcita'  
then what is the use of You? (Gāthā, 499);

and he conveys the same meaning in another place in the following words, namely,

Neither 'prārabdha,' nor 'kriyamāṇa,  
nor 'saṁcita' exists for the Devotee;  
If he sees that the Parameśvara alone has become  
everything;  
and has pervaded everything in and out || (Gāthā,  
1023);

and it has been stated by the Blessed Lord even in the Bhagavadgītā that "īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānāṁ hṛddeśe 'rjuna

tiṣṭhati" (18.61), i.e., "the Blessed Lord Himself has His abode in the heart of all persons, and makes them do all Actions mechanically". It has been proved in the chapter on Cause and Effect, that the Ātman is absolutely free to acquire Knowledge; but instead of that, there now occur statements in the chapter on Devotion, to the effect that the Reason itself is guided by the Parameśvara, such as, "tasya tasyācalāṁ śraddhāṁ tām eva vidadhāmy aham" (Gī. 7.21), (i.e., "Whatever form of deity any Devotee may desire to worship with Devotion, I steady his devotion thereon" ~Translator.) or "dadāmi buddhiyogam taṁ yena mām upayānti te" (GH. 10. 10), (i.e., "to them, I give the Yoga of the (equable) Reason, to enable them to come and reach me" ~Translator.); and in as much as all the Action, which, is performed in the universe, is carried on by the authority of the Parameśvara, it is stated in the Philosophy of Devotion, that the wind blows out of dread of His anger, and that the Sun and the Moon rotate as a result of His strength (Kaṭha. 6.3, Br. 3.8.9); nay, that even the leaf of a tree does not move unless He desires it; and on that account, we come across statements in the Philosophy of Devotion, that man is only a tool which is put forward (Gī. 11. 33); and that the Parameśvara

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inhabits his heart, and makes him mechanically perform all his various actions like a machine. Tukārāma Buvā says:-

The created being is only a nominal doer;  
his life is wasted in saying 'this is mine', 'this is mine'.  
(Gā. 2310. 4).

In order to carry on properly the various activities of the world and to maintain its beneficial condition, it is necessary that everybody must continue performing Action; and the summary of the advice given above is, that instead of performing these Actions with the feeling that they are 'mine', as is done by ignorant people, the Jñānin should perform all Actions till death with the idea of dedicating them to the Brahman, consistently with the principle enunciated in the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad; and the same advice has been preached to Arjuna by the Blessed Lord in the following words:—

yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat ।  
yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kuruṣva madarpaṇam ॥ (Gī.  
9.27)

that is, "whatever you do, or eat, or offer by way of sacrifice,. or give, or perform by way of austerity, dedicate all that to Me," so that you will not be caught in the bondage of the Karma. This very stanza from the Bhagavadgītā has been taken into the Śiva-gītā; and the same meaning has been conveyed in the following stanza in the Bhāgavata:—

kāyena vācā manasendriyair vā buddhyātmanā vā  
'nusṛtasvabhāvāt ।

karoti yad yat sakalaṁ parasmai nārāyaṇāyeti  
samarpayet tat || (Bhāg. 11.2.26),

that is, "all that we do, as a result of the inspiration of the Body or Speech, or Mind, or of the organs, or of the Intelligence, or of the Ātman, or according to our inherent nature, should be dedicated by us to the highest of the highest (parātpara) Nārāyaṇa". In short, that which is known as the combination of Knowledge and Action, or the Abandonment of the Hope of Fruit, or as Action performed with the idea of dedicating it to the Brahman (Gī. 4.24; 5.10; 12.12) in the Philosophy of

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the Absolute Self, is now known as "Action performed with the idea of dedicating it to Śrī Kṛṣṇa". At the root of the fact that persons who follow the Path of Devotion utter the words 'Govinda', 'Govinda' each time they partake of food, is the idea of dedicating everything to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The Jñānin Janaka said that all his activities were carried on by him desirelessly, for public welfare; and the Devotees of the Blessed Lord perform even the Action of partaking of food or drink, with the sole idea of dedicating it to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The prevalent practice of uttering the words, 'idaṁ kṛṣṇārpaṇam astu' (i.e. "this is dedicated to Śrī Kṛṣṇa" ~Translator.) uttered at the end of feasts given to Brahmins, or other religious performances, or

of making an oblation of water with the words, "harir dātā harir bhoktā" (i.e., "the Blessed Lord is the Giver, the Blessed Lord is the Enjoyer" ~Translator.) owes its origin to the above stanza from the Bhagavadgītā. It is true that the same thing has now happened to these utterances, as happens when the ear-ornaments disappear and the holes in the ear, which held those ornaments, remain; and the officiating priest .now utters these words like a parrot, without understanding the true deep import conveyed by them; and the person who gives the feast, performs the physical exercise of making an oblation of water, like a deaf person; but, if we go to the root of the matter, this is nothing but a way of performing all Actions, after having given up the Hope of Fruit; and if one makes fun of this practice, the practice does not come into disrepute, but the person who makes fun, only makes an exhibition of his own ignorance. If everyone performs all his Actions in this life – and even the Action of remaining alive – with the idea of dedicating them to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and abandoning the Hope of Fruit, where is the room for a sinful desire, and how can any person perform any sinful Action? And also, where is the necessity of separately giving the advice that one should perform Action for the benefit of others, or even sacrifice one's life for the benefit of others? As both one's self, and everyone else, has been included in the Parameśvara, and as the Parameśvara is included in one 's self and everyone else, both one's-interest and others-interest are merged in the highest goal in the shape of the dedication

to Śrī Kṛṣṇa; and then, the following words of the saint Tukārāma, namely, "the incarnations of saints are for the benefit of the world I they labour their own bodies by philanthropy", applies everywhere. I have proved logically in the last chapter, that there is no difficulty about the personal maintenance of that person, who performs all Actions with the idea of dedicating them to Śrī Kṛṣṇa; and it is with the same purport that the Blessed Lord has now conveyed the assurance in the Philosophy of Devotion in the Gītā that: "teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānāṁ yogakṣemaṁ vahāmy aham" (Gī. 9.22), (i.e., "I look after the maintenance and welfare of those persons who are continually steeped in the Yoga " ~Translator.) It is, therefore, not necessary to mention specifically that the highest of the Devotees of the Blessed Lord have to gradually raise Devotees of the lower orders to higher stages, without upsetting their devotion, and according to their respective competence, in the same way as the Jñānins, who have reached the highest state, must place ordinary persons on the Path of Righteousness, without upsetting their Intelligence (making a 'buddhi-bheda'), (Gī. 3.26). In short, all the doctrines which have been propounded in the Philosophy of the Absolute Self, or in the Philosophy of Cause and Effect, have in this way been left untouched in the Philosophy of Devotion, with only verbal differences; and it will be seen, that this

method of harmonising Knowledge with Devotion, had come into vogue in India in very ancient times.

But, if a totally different meaning results from a verbal change, such a verbal change is not made; because, under any circumstances, the meaning of the words is the most important, factor. For instance, if we make a verbal change in the doctrine from the Philosophy of Cause and Effect that every- body must personally make an effort for the Acquisition of Knowledge, and for thereby bringing about his own Release, and say, that even this Action is to be performed by the Parameśvara, the ignorant will become idle. Therefore, the doctrine "ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhuḥ ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ" (Gī. 6.5), i.e., "one is one's own friend and also one's own enemy", is also enunciated in the Philosophy of Devotion as it is, that is to say, without any verbal alteration. I have quoted above the

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stanza of Tukārāma, "Who has thereby lost anything? I one has oneself done harm to oneself" (Gā. 4448), (See p. 388 above – Trans). But the saint Tukārāma has in a still more explicit way said:—

"There is not with God, the bundle of Release;

that He can come and give it to you, as an object by itself;

One must conquer one's organs and liberate one's mind; from the objects of pleasure. (Gā. 4297).

I have quoted above in the tenth chapter a similar stanza from the Upaniṣads, namely, "mana eva manuṣyāṇāṁ kāraṇaṁ bandhamokṣayoḥ," (i.e., "the Mind alone is the reason for the Bondage, or the Release of man" –Trans). It is true that the Parameśvara is the performer of, and the One who causes to be performed, all the various makes and breaks in the world; yet, the doctrine of the Philosophy of Cause and Effect, that He gives a reward to every human being according to his own deeds, which has been formulated in order that He should not remain open to the charge of cruelty or partiality, has, for the same reason, been adopted without any verbal alteration in the Philosophy of Devotion. In the same way, although the Īśvara is looked upon as perceptible for purposes of worship, yet, the doctrine of the Philosophy of the Absolute Self, that 'whatever is perceptible, is only Māyā, and that the true Parameśvara is beyond that Māyā', is not given up in the Philosophy of Devotion; and I have stated above that the form of the Jīva, according to the Vedānta-Sūtras, has been retained unchanged in the Gītā for the same reason. This skill of our Vedic religion of harmonising the natural inclination of the human mind towards the Visible or the Perceptible, with the recondite doctrines of philosophy, is not to be seen in the Philosophy of Devotion of any other people, in any other



country. When these people once attach themselves to some qualityful form of the Parameśvara, and thus come into the sphere of the Perceptible, they remain entangled in that sphere; and, not being able to see anything else besides that form, a vain glory about

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their own qualityful symbol, takes hold of their minds; and when this happens, they wrongly begin to differentiate between Philosophy on the one hand, and the Path of Devotion on the other hand. But, as the dawn of philosophy had taken place in our country from extremely ancient times, there is seen no conflict between Devotion and Spiritual Knowledge in the religion of the Gītā; and, whereas the Vedic Path of Knowledge is chastened by Devotion, the Vedic Path of Devotion is likewise chastened by Knowledge; and therefore, whichever Path is taken by\* man, he ultimately attains the same excellent state. The importance of this harmony between imperceptible Knowledge and perceptible Devotion, was not fully appreciated % the philosophers pertaining to the religion which adhered merely to the perceptible Christ; and it is not a matter of surprise, that from their one-sided and philosophically short- sighted point of view, there should appear to them an inconsistency in the philosophy of the Gītā. But, the most surprising part of it all is, that instead of appreciating this valuable quality of our Vedic religion, some

imitative persons .among us have come forward to find fault with that very religion! This is an excellent example of the saying in the Māghakāvya that:

athavā 'bhiniviṣṭabuddhiṣu |

vrajati vyarthakatām subhāṣitam || ,

i.e., "when once the Mind is engrossed by a false idea, even that which is true, is not appreciated by it" (Māghakāvya 16.43).

The importance, which is attached to the fourth stage of life in the Path of Renunciation mentioned in the Smṛtis, is not attached to it in the Philosophy of Devotion, or in the Bhāgavata religion. It is true that the religious arrangement of the four castes and the four stages of life, is also mentioned in the Bhāgavata religion; but, as the principal emphasis of that religion is on Devotion, that man whose Devotion is the most intense, is the best of all, according to the Bhāgavata religion, whether he is a householder, or a denizen of the woods or a Saṁnyāsin; and that religion does not attach much importance to these modes of life (Bhāg. 11.18.13, 14). The state of a Saṁnyāsin is a very important part of the religion

of the Smṛtis, but not of the Bhāgavata religion. Nevertheless, there is no rule that those who follow the Bhāgavata religion, should never become Saṁnyāsins; and it is stated in the Gītā itself that Asceticism and Energism (Karma-Yoga) are both of equal value, from the point of view of Release. It is not impossible to come across people following the Path of Devotion, who have given up all their worldly activities, and become indifferent to the world, without having actually taken up the state of a Saṁnyāsin. Nay, we even come across such persons from early times; but I have clearly shown above in the eleventh chapter, that such persons did not carry any weight at that time; and that in the Bhagavadgītā, Energism (Karma-Yoga) has been considered superior to Abandonment of Action (Karma-Tyāga). This importance of the philosophy of Karma-Yoga gradually lost ground as time went, and in modern times it is the common belief of even persons following the Bhāgavata religion, that the Devotee of the Blessed Lord is a person who- pays no attention to worldly affairs, but is steeped in Devotion, with total indifference to the world. It is, therefore, necessary to again explain here at some length what the chief doctrine and the true advice of the Gītā on this matter is, from the point of view of Devotion. The Brahman, according to the Philosophy of Devotion or the Bhāgavata religion, is the qualityful Bhagavan (Blessed Lord) Himself. If this Blessed Lord Himself carries on the activities of the world, and maintains the world by taking up various incarnations for the protection of saints and the punishment of evil-doers, it

need not be said that the Devotees of the Blessed Lord must themselves follow the same example for the benefit of the world. Śrī Hanuman was the greatest devotee of Śrī Rāmacandra; but he did not give up the task of punishing evil-doers like Rāvaṇa and others by his own prowess. Even Bhīṣma is considered to be one of the greatest of the devotees of the Blessed Lord, but though he was himself a celibate throughout life he still carried on the work of protecting his kingdom and those on his side, according to his own status in life, so long as he was alive. It is true that when a man has Realised the Parameśvara by means of Devotion, he has no more anything left to-

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acquire for his own benefit; but the Path of Devotion, which is founded on Love, does not eradicate noble sentiments like kindness, generosity, love of duty, etc.; and these emotions become on the contrary extremely purified; and then, instead of falling into the logical dilemma of whether to perform Action or not to perform Action, the Devotees of the Blessed Lord necessarily and naturally acquire a tendency, which promotes universal welfare and according to which, "the incarnations of saints are for the welfare of the world; they labour their own bodies by philanthropy || " (Gā. 929.3);

because, they acquire a non-differentiating frame of mind, as described above in the eleventh chapter, according to which:

He who takes to his bosom; such as are helpless  
And he who shows to his male and female servants;  
the same kindness which he shows to his son. (Gā. 960).

If one says that it is the Parameśvara Who creates the world and carries on all the activities in it, it becomes clear that the arrangements of the four castes, which exist in order to satisfactorily carry on the activities of that creation, have come into existence by His will; and even in the Gītā, the Blessed Lord has clearly said that: "cāturvarṇyaṁ mayā sṛṣṭaṁ guṇakarmavibhāgaśaḥ" (Gī. 4.13), (i.e., "I myself have created the four castes, according to the divisions of the qualities and of Karma" ~Translator.). In short, it is the desire of the Parameśvara that everyone should perform his social duties according to his own qualifications, and thereby bring about universal welfare (lokasaṁgraha); and it then logically follows that the Parameśvara causes a human being to be born in order to make him a tool for getting performed by his hands, a particular portion of these worldly activities, which are going on by His will; and if a man does not perform that duty which the Parameśvara has intended that he should perform, he incurs the sin of not having carried out the behests of the Parameśvara Himself. If a man entertains the egotistical idea that "these Actions are Mine or that I perform them for my self-interest", then he will have to suffer the good or evil consequences of those Actions. But the Gītā says, that when

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a man performs those Actions merely as duties, and with the idea of dedicating them to the Parameśvara, in the belief that He is causing to be performed those Actions, which He intends to perform, by making him the man a tool for performing them (Gī. 11.33), there is nothing wrong or improper about them; and, on the contrary, carrying out one's own duties in this way amounts to a kind of sāttvika worship of the Parameśvara Who lives in all created beings. The Blessed Lord has explained, by way of summary, the full sum and substance of His advice in the following words: "the Parameśvara remains in the hearts of all created beings, and makes them dance about like mechanical toys; therefore, the ideas that 'I give up a particular Action' or that 'I perform it' are both false; give up the Hope of Fruit, and continue performing all Actions with the idea of dedicating them to Śrī Kṛṣṇa; even if you determine that you will not perform those Actions, you will be forced to perform them as a result of your inherent nature (prakṛti-dharma); therefore, you must merge all selfish interests in the Blessed Lord, and perform all Actions which have befallen you, according to your status in life, for universal welfare, with an eye to the highest ideal (paramārtha), and with perfect indifference to the world; I am doing the same thing; see My example, and act accordingly ". As there is no conflict between Jñāna and Desireless Karma, so also does there arise no

conflict between Devotion, and Actions performed with the idea of dedicating them to Kṛṣṇa. Saint Tukārāma, the king of Devotees in the Maharashtra, has explained his merger into the form of the Parameśvara, Who is "aṇor aṇīyān mahato mahīyān" (Kaṭha. 2.20; Gī. 8.9), i.e., "smaller than the atom, and bigger than the biggest", as a result of Devotion; and he has clearly said that he was living in the world only for the purpose of doing good to others, in the following abhaṅga stanzas:-

I (Tukā) am more minute than the minutest atom;  
I am as big as the firmament;  
I have annihilated by swallowing that body;  
which is only a form of the Cosmic Illusion ||  
I have gone beyond the trinity;

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a light has been lighted in this Body  
Tukā says that: " now  
I survive only for philanthropy". (Gā. 3587).

He has nowhere stated that there is no more anything left for him to do, as is said by those who follow the Path of Saṁnyāsa; in the same way, the opinion of the saint Tukārāma on this matter becomes quite clear from the following other abhaṅga stanzas, namely,

Taking up the beggar's bowl;

lie on such a disgraceful life!  
Such persons will by Nārāyaṇa;  
be always abandoned. (Gā. 2595)

or,

The Real-worshipper (satyavādī) performs all the  
activities of worldly life;  
in the same way as the lotus remains in the water,  
untouched by the water;  
He who is philanthropical, he who is kindly towards all  
created beings;  
he is in the state of being merged in the Ātman . (Ga.  
3780.2.3).

But, although the saint Tukārāma was a householder, his  
inclination was towards Abandonment of Action; and  
therefore, if one wants a full explanation of the doctrine of the  
Gītā, or of the characteristic of the Bhāgavata religion, namely,  
' intense Devotion combined with Desireless Action,  
performed with the idea of dedicating it to the Parameśvara',  
he must turn to the work Dāsabodha, written by Śrī Samarthā  
Rāmadāsa Svāmī, who was the 'venerable preceptor' to whom  
saint Tukārāma himself directed Śivājī Maharaja to 'surrender  
himself '. He (Rāmadāsa) has said, that ordinary people should  
learn to perform their own Actions, by seeing how the Siddhas,  
who have become perfect by realising the pure form of the  
Parameśvara, keep performing their own Actions, desirelessly,  
according to their own qualifications, and in order to "make  
many persons wise" (Dāsa. 19.10.14); and after repeating



several times that "unless a man does something, nothing happens" (Dāsa. 19. 10. 25; 12. 9. 6; 18. 7.3), he has said as follows in the last dīkṣā, in order to establish a complete

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harmony between the power of Karma and the redeeming power of Devotion:—

Strength lies in activity; the strength will be his who is active;

But in such a man there must be; the seat of the Blessed Lord. (Dāsa. 20. 4. 36)

The same meaning is conveyed by the words: "mām anusmara yudhya ca" (Gī. 8.7), i.e., "always remember me and fight"; or, by the statement at the end of the sixth chapter that, "even among the Karma-yogins, the Devotee is the most excellent"; and, there is also a statement in the eighteenth chapter that:

yataḥ pravṛttir bhūtānām yena sarvam idaṁ tatam ।  
svakarmaṇā tam abhyarcya siddhiṁ vindati mānavaḥ ॥  
(Gī. 18.46)

that is, "man attains perfection (siddhi) by worshipping by Desire- less Actions, proper to his status in life (and not by flowers, or by words merely) that Parameśvara, Who has created the whole of this world". Nay; the meaning of this stanza and even of the entire Gītā, is that by performing

Actions desirelessly, according to one's own status in life, a man performs a sort of worship, devotion, or prayer of that Virāṭa-formed Parameśvara, Who is inside all created beings. When the Gītā asks a person to perform the worship of the Parameśvara by Actions proper to his status in life, it is not to be understood as saying that the nine kinds of Devotion, such as, "śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ", (i.e., "saying or hearing the praise of the Lord Viṣṇu" ~Translator.) are not acceptable to it. But the Gītā says, that (i) it is not proper to abandon Action as being inferior, and to remain steeped only in this nine-fold form of Devotion; (ii) that one must perform all the various Actions, which have befallen one, according to the injunctions of the Śāstras, and that (iii) "these Actions should not be performed, as pertaining to oneself, but with the idea of the Parameśvara in the Mind, and with a mine-less (nirmama) frame of mind, believing that they are the Actions of the Parameśvara, and for the benefit of the world created by Him; so that, the Karma is not wasted, but on the other hand, these Actions amount to the service or worship of, or the Devotion to the Parameśvara: and instead

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of one's acquiring the sin or merit of the Action, one attains a blissful state". Those commentators on the Gītā, who follow the Path of Devotion, disregard this doctrine; and in their works, they explain the purport of the Gītā to be, that Karma

or Action is inferior and Devotion is paramount. But, this summary drawn by commentators pertaining to the School of Devotion, is as one-sided as that drawn by the followers of the School of Renunciation. The Path of Devotion mentioned in the Gītā is based on Action, and the most important principle in it is, that the worship of the Parameśvara is made not only by speech or by flowers, but also by Desireless Actions, pertinent to one's own status in life; and that such a worship must necessarily be performed by everybody. And, as this principle of Devotion cum Action has not been enunciated anywhere else in the same way as in the Gītā, this must be considered to be the characteristic of the Philosophy of Devotion mentioned in the Gītā.

Although in this way, I have established a complete consonance between the Path of Knowledge and the Path of Devotion from the point of view of Karma-Yoga, yet, I must, before concluding, clearly mention the one important factor which is to be found in the Philosophy of Devotion in addition to those found in the Philosophy of Knowledge. As the Path of Knowledge is based entirely on Intelligence, it becomes difficult to follow for ordinary persons of poor intelligence; and, as has been stated above, it is easy for everybody to follow the Path of Devotion, as it is based on Faith, and is accessible by love, and visible. But, there is another difficulty in the Path of Knowledge besides its being difficult to follow. If one considers the Mīmāṃsā of Jaiminī, or the Upaniṣads, or the Vedānta-Sūtras, they are full of discussions about sacrificial

ritual prescribed by the Śrutis, or about the Parabrahman in the form of "neti, neti" (i.e., "It is not this, It is not that " ~Translator.), which are based on Abandonment of Action; and they have ultimately laid down that the right of performing sacrificial ritual prescribed by the Śrutis as a means of acquiring heaven, as also of reciting the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, which was necessary for obtaining Release, belonged only to the three upper classes (Ve. Sū. 1.3.34 – 38)

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How the women belonging to these three classes, or the ordinary men and women engaged in agriculture, and other occupations, for the benefit of society, according to the arrangement of the four castes, are to obtain Release, is a Question which has not been considered in these hooks. "Well; if one says that women and Śūdras can never attain Release because the Vedas are thus inaccessible to them, then, there are statements in the Upaniṣads that Gargi and other women obtained Perfection by acquiring Knowledge; and there are statements in the Purāṇas that Vidura and other Śūdras did likewise (Ve. Sū. 3, 4.36 – 39). Therefore, one cannot lay down the proposition, that it is only the men folk belonging to the three upper classes, who obtain Release; and if one accepts the position that even women and Śūdras can obtain Release, then, one must explain by what means they can obtain Knowledge. Bādarāyaṇācārya mentions the means:

"viśeṣānugraha ca" (Ve. Sū. 3.4.38), i.e., "the special favour of the Parameśvara"; and it is stated in the Bhāgavata (Bhāg. 1.4.25) that this means, in the shape of Devotion cum Action, has been mentioned as a special favour (viśeṣānugraha), "in the Bhārata and naturally also in the Gītā, because the Śrutis cannot be heard by women, Śūdras, or nominal Brahmins (of the Kali-yuga)". Although the Knowledge which is acquired by this path, and the Knowledge of the Brahman mentioned in the Upaniṣads, are one and the same, yet, the difference between men and women or between Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras does not any more remain in this path, and the special quality of this path has been mentioned in the Gītā in the following stanza:—

mām hi pārtha vyapāśritya yepi syuḥ pāpayonayaḥ ।  
 striyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās tepi yānti parām gatim ॥  
 (Gī. 9.32)

that is, "O, Pārtha, by taking shelter in Me, women, Vaiśyas and Śūdras and other lower classes, in which birth has been taken as a result of sin, attain the highest perfection"; and! this same stanza has appeared again in the Anugītā in the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 19.61); and, it is stated in the conversation, between the Brahmin and the hunter (vyādha) in the Vanaparva, that the flesh-selling hunter has explained how

Release can be attained by acting according to one's own duties desirelessly: and the same explanation is given in the Śānti-parva by Tulādhāra, who was a merchant, to the Brahmin ascetic Jājali (Ma. Bhs. Vana, 206 – 214; Śān. 260 – 263). From this it follows that, that; man whose Reason has become equable towards all, is the highest of man, whether he is a carpenter, or a merchant, or a butcher, by profession. It is clear that, according to the Blessed Lord, the spiritual worth of a man does not depend on the profession followed by him, or on the caste to which he belongs, but entirely on the purity of his conscience. When in this way, the gateway of Release has been opened to all people in society, there arises in the hearts of all such persons, a strange self-consciousness, of which the nature can be gauged from the history of the Bhāgavata religion in Maharashtra. To the Parameśvara, women, or the lowest of mixed tribes, or Brahmins are the same. "The Parameśvara craves (only) for your Faith". He does not care for symbols, or for the black or white colour of the skin, nor does He care for the difference between men and women, or castes like the Brahmins or the Cāṇḍālas (tribes born of the mixture of Brahmins and Śūdras). The saint Tukārāma says that:—

Brahmins, Kṣatriyas. Vaiśyas, and Śūdras  
and the Cāṇḍālas, all have the right;  
As also children, women, men  
and even prostitutes.

Tukā says that he has found by experience  
That even others, who are devout

experience happiness by their good fortune. (Gā.  
2382.5, 6)

Nay; it is a doctrine of the Gītā, that "however sinful a man may be, if he surrenders himself to the Blessed Lord, wholly and solely, even at the moment of his death, the Parameśvara does not cast him off" (Gī. 9.30; and 8.5 – 8). Seeing the word 'prostitutes' in the above stanza, some learned persons, who parade their purity, might feel offended; but it must be said that such persons do not understand the true principle of Religion. This doctrine has been adopted not only in the Hindu religion, but also in the Buddhist religion (Milinda-Praśna 3.7.2); and there are stories in Buddhistic religious

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treatises, that Buddha initiated a prostitute by name Āmrapālī, as also a thief by name Agulīmāla; and there is a statement even in the Christian scriptures that because one of the two thieves, who were crucified at the same time as the Lord Christ, surrendered himself to the Lord at the moment of his death, he was saved by the Christ on that account (Luke. 23.42 and 43); and the Lord Christ has Himself said in one place that even prostitutes, who put faith in His religion would obtain, salvation (Matthew. 21.31; Luke. 7.50). And I have shown above in the tenth chapter that the same conclusion is arrived at even from the point of view of the Philosophy of the

Absolute Self (adhyātma). But, although this religious doctrine is logically unquestionable, yet, a man, the whole of whose life has been spent in doing evil actions, will, in all probability, not get the inspiration of surrendering himself wholly and solely to the Blessed Lord at the moment of his death; and then nothing more results beyond mechanically opening the mouth in the throes of death to utter the letter 'Rā', and then closing it forever by uttering the next letter 'ma'. Therefore, the definite assurance of the Blessed Lord to everybody is that, if a man throughout his life, and not only at the moment of death, keeps the thought of the Blessed Lord continually in his mind, and performs all Actions pertaining to his status in life, solely with the idea of dedicating them to Him, then, whatever may be the caste to which he belongs, he is as good as Released, notwithstanding that he has been performing Actions (Gī. 9.26 – 28 and 30 – 34).

When one considers and takes into account the sense of Equality appearing in the Philosophy of Devotion taught by the Gītā, and its capacity to enable all equally, to easily grasp the Knowledge of the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman mentioned in the Upaniṣads, without sacrificing the ordinary activities of worldly life, and without establishing any difference between the four castes or the four stages of life, or the communities, or even between men and women, one understands the true import of the summing up of the Religion of the Gītā made by the Blessed Lord in the last chapter of the Gītā, by way of a definite assurance, in the following terms:



"give up all other religions (dharma), and surrender yourself solely to Me; I shall redeem you from all sins, do not be afraid". The word 'dharma' has here been used in the comprehensive meaning that, all the practical paths or means, which have been shown for acquiring the highest excellence of the Self, in the shape of reaching the Parameśvara, by remaining free from sin, while following the ordinary activities of life, are 'dharma' (duty). In the Anugītā, in the conversation between the preceptor and the disciple, the Ṛṣis are said to have questioned Brahmadeva as to which of the various paths, such as, Non-Violence, Veracity, Penances, Spiritual Knowledge, Sacrificial ritual, Charity, Karma, Renunciation etc., mentioned by different people, was the most correct one (Aśva. 49); and even in the Śānti-parva, a question has been asked in the Uñccha-vṛtyupākhyāna as to which of the various paths, such as, the duties enjoined on the householder, or on the denizens of the woods, or on kings, or the service of one's parents, or death on a battle-field for the Kṣatriya, or religious contemplation for the Brahmin, etc., was the most acceptable path, as all these had been mentioned in the Śāstras as the means of acquiring heaven. These various paths of dharma or Dharmas may appear to be mutually inconsistent; but, in as much as the ultimate ideal of 'equality of affection towards all created beings' is reached by means of the concentration of

the Mind by Faith, arising from one's taking to any- one of these paths, the writers of the Śāstras consider all these practical paths as of equal value. Nevertheless, as there is a likelihood of the Mind becoming confused as a result of its being caught in the various paths of the worship of different symbols, the final and definite assurance of the Blessed Lord, not only to Arjuna, but to everybody in the name of Arjuna, is that, one should give up all the various paths of Purification of the Mind, and should "surrender yourself solely to ME; I shall redeem you from all sins, do not be afraid". Even the Saint Tukārāma makes his ultimate prayer to God, which entails the annihilation of diverse kinds of dharma, in the following words.

—

Burn that knowledge, burn that wisdom;  
may my Faith remain on the feet of the Viṭṭhala ॥

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Burn those religious practices, burn that contemplation;  
may my Mind remain fixed on the feet of the Viṭṭhala .  
(Gā.3464)

This is the pinnacle of definite advice, or of prayer. 'Devotion ' is the last sweet mouthful out of the golden dish; of Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā. We have taken this mouthful of Love; now let us

take the final sip of water (āpoṣṇī) [1] and; prepare to rise from the feast.

—:O:—

## END OF VOLUME I

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[1] This is a religious practice followed by Brahmins in India who take a final sip of water, known as 'āpoṣṇī', from the hollow of palm, uttering a mantra (sacred words), just before finishing the dinner and rising.  
~Translator.

**The Hindu Philosophy of Life,  
Ethics and Religion**

OM-TAT-SAT

**ŚRIMAD BHAGAVAD  
GĪTĀ RAHASYA  
OR  
KARMA-YOGA- ŚĀSTRA  
VOLUME - II**

By

**BAL GANGADHAR TILAK, B.A., LL.B.,**

Translated by

**Bhalchandra Sitaram Sukthankar,  
M.A., LL.B.,**

# THE NUMBER OF VERSES ATTRIBUTED TO THE VARIOUS CHARACTERS FIGURING IN THE GĪTĀ IN ORDER OF ADHYĀYAS.

Chap.	Dhṛtarāṣṭra.	Saṅjaya.	Arjuna.	Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.	Total No.
I	1	25	21	–	47
II	–	3	6	63	72
III	–	–	3	40	43
IV	–	–	1	41	42
V	–	–	1	28	29
VI	–	–	5	42	47
VII	–	–	...	30	30
VIII	–	–	2	26	28
IX	–	–	...	34	34
X	–	–	7	35	42
XI	–	8	33	14	55
XII	–	–	1	19	20

<b>XIII</b>	–	–	–	34	<b>34</b>
<b>XIV</b>	–	–	1	26	<b>27</b>
<b>XV</b>	–	–	–	20	<b>20</b>
<b>XVI</b>	–	–	–	24	<b>24</b>
<b>XVII</b>	–	–	1	27	<b>28</b>
<b>XVIII</b>	–	5	2	71	<b>78</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>574</b>	<b>700</b>

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# PROMINENT PERSONALITIES ON THE GĪTĀ, MR. TILAK, AND THE GTTA-RAHASYA.

(Continued from p. xxiii of Vol. I).

(8) SHRIMANT BALASAHEB PANT PRATINIDHI, RAJA SAHEB  
OF AUNDH.

The Bhagvadgeeta has been regarded from time immemorial as one of the three *prasthanas* or the status books of Indian philosophy, and is commented on in their own way by eminent Acharyas like the great Shankara, Ramanuja, Nimbarka, Madhva, Vallabha, and others, each of whom, however, being the pioneer of an independent school of philosophy, twisted the import of this great book in such a way as to make it in conformity with his own system. The illustrious Dnyaneshwar wrote his first treatise on this book in Marathi and the Geeta-Rahasya of the late Lokmanya Tilak is its only befitting successor. The author of the Dnyaneshwari had prominently in his view its devotional aspect, which he naturally emphasised in his work; but, as the author of the Geeta-Rahasya rightly points out, the "Geeta" is neither a book of knowledge nor of

devotion nor of action: but rather a harmonious combination of them all. Geeta-Rahasya can thus be said to be the most honest and impartial commentary on the book.

The work of translating such a book into English was by no means easy for Solicitor Sukthankar; and he too ought to have realised it at the time of undertaking this job. His responsibility was twofold: to make the translation intelligible, and at the same time not to cause any damage to the original; and judging from the translation that we have in hand, he can be very well said to have carried out his work most satisfactorily. We went through almost all the portion of the translation and found it to be quite interesting and intelligible without the help of the original. That the translation is most strictly faithful to the text only shows his self-control and unbiassed bent of mind, which a true translator ought to have. To make the translation worthy of the original, Solicitor Sukthankar seems to have spared no pains.

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Geeta-Rahasya, apart from being one of the greatest philosophical treatises in Marathi, is the crown-work of the late Lokamanya; and was badly in need of such a translation for becoming known to the world at large. The Geeta-Rahasya being an indicator to its writer's philosophy of life, the



translation will not only help the world to judge the writer and realise the value of his original work, but will also help it to understand the real meaning of the Geeta itself and make it aware of him as a master-intellect that everybody can be proud of. We must all be very grateful to Solicitor Sukthankar for his commendable work of translation, and hope him every due and well deserved reward for his efforts.

**(9) THE HON'BLE MR. JUSTICE FAIZ B. TYABJI, High Court,  
Bombay.**

It is a sincere pleasure to me to hear that Lokmanya Tilak's scholarly works are being rendered available in English. The Gita has been frequently translated into English though it is not surprising that scholars are not altogether satisfied with the renderings that have so far been published. A work giving a really spiritual interpretation of this inspiring work must supply an urgent need of the young men and women of to-day. The danger of being cut off from what is considered religion requires particular attention in these days. The danger is the more serious, as our young men are apt to fear that their spiritual needs cannot be met from texts that are the foundations of religion. The great religions, it is true, have had their foundations in the East. But, it is thought that their interpretation, so as to adopt them to the needs of to-day, must be sought from the West. To turn, therefore, to the most spiritual expressions of our own religious teachers, as

interpreted by the modern teachers in the East, is an extremely necessary part of the educational experiences through which we should all pass. To men of ripe experience, it must be a peculiar satisfaction to have such a work available. I am looking forward with keen interest to this publication.

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**(10) SIR MORAMMAD IQBAL.**

I have always held the Bhagavad-Gītā in the highest admiration.

**(11) SRI MEHER BABA,**

The Bhagavad-Gita has exerted a tremendous spiritual influence on humanity at large. As the Blessed Lord Sri Krishna was born a Hindu, the Gita is more often than never regarded as a sacred book of the Hindus; but really speaking, it is a sacred book of not merely the Hindus but of the entire human race. The message that it contains was meant not merely for India, but for the whole world. Let mankind act in accordance with its message, and the universal brotherhood will surely be automatically brought about.

Those who cast doubts on the perfect sainthood of Shri Krishna, know not what they are doing. He was certainly a God-incarnate; and because He was a Sadguru, a Perfect Saint, He was successful in inundating the world with spirituality and lofty spiritual teachings.

**(12) Rao Bahadur Vidvatkulaśekhara C. V. VAIDYA, MA., LL.B.**  
THE AGE OF THE GITA AND GITA-JAYANTI.

I propose to place my views on the "Age of the Gītā" as succinctly as possible. When was this unique work composed, is the question which naturally arises in every mind.

The Gītā itself purports to state that it was taught by Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna, hero of the Mahābhārata War, on the field of battle, before the fight commenced, but when the fighters were actually facing each other, ready to commence the fight. It follows, therefore, that the date of the Gītā is the date of the commencement of the Bhārata fight. This date is the subject of dispute between European scholars, followed by some Indian scholars, and myself. I hold that the date assigned to the fight by all ancient Indian writers, especially astronomers, is the correct one, viz. Mārgaśīrṣa Śuddha 13, Pre-aka 3180 (3102 B. O). I will not enter into the details of the controversy here, but merely indicate my grounds.

The Bhārata heroes are referred to in the 'Śatapatha. Brāhmaṇa', and the date of this Brāhmaṇa has been fixed by Shankar Balkrishna Dikshit, a great modern Indian astronomical researcher, at about 3,000 B. C. from the astronomical statement in it that the Kṛttikās rise exactly in the East. Attempt has lately been made by Winternitz to dislodge this date by suggesting that the statement (एता वै कृत्तिकाः प्राच्यो दिशो नच्यवन्ते) in the 'Śatapatha' means only that the Kṛttikās come on the East line, and not that they rise in the East. But this rendering is negatived by the very next sentence 'all other stars deviate from the East' (सर्वापि ह वा अन्यानि नक्षत्राणि च्यवन्ते) in the 'Śatapatha', as shown by me in detail in an article published in the Bhandarkar Research Institute Journal. If, then, Parikṣita and others, mentioned in the 'Śatapatha' of. 3,000 B. C. as recent kings, are taken to be the grandson and great-grandsons of Arjuna, the date of the fight, viz. one year before the commencement of the Kali age, given by all Indian astronomers, or 3102 B. C., is perfectly borne out by the 'Śatapatha' statement. European scholars, and some Indian scholars, too, place the fight about 1400 B. C. on the strength of the pedigrees of kings given in Purāṇas from the Nine Nandas to Bṛhadratha, son of Jarāsaṃdha. The evidence of the Purāṇas, however, has no value when compared with

the evidence of the 'Śatapatha'. Indeed, Purāṇa genealogies are not reliable, particularly for ancient dynasties, especially as they are contradicted by the evidence of Megasthenes, recorded about 320 B.C., as shown by me in detail in "Mahābhārata-Mīmāṃsā", a Hindi work. This short summary of the controversy will show to the reader that the year of the Bhārata fight must be taken to be 3102 B. C.

With regard to the exact day of the fight, there is also, a controversy. But the difference is only of two days. The Gītā-Jayanti day is Mārgaśīrṣa śuddha 11, 'Ekādaśī' day; but the statement in the Mahābhārata and the course of the fight as described therein lead to no other day than śuddha 13, and this is the date accepted by old writers and commentators of the Mahābhārata. They have consented to hold the Jayanti for 3 days continually, viz., from 'Ekādaśī' to Trayodaśī.

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To speak in English dates, the Mahābhārata fight commenced in December 3102 B. C, and the 'Gītā' was preached on the morning of that day.

Having placed before the reader the day by date and year on which the doctrines of the 'Gītā' were preached by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, we go on to state that this cannot be the date of the 'Gītā' as it

is before us. For the first chapter, etc., cannot have belonged to the teaching, as it was actually given. The whole story is told afterwards by someone, and that is Vyāsa undoubtedly. As the teaching of Christ is given in several books of the New Testament written by St. John and others, so Vyāsa may be taken to be the writer who first recorded this teaching in a work to be studied and recited. When this was written by Vyāsa cannot be definitely stated. He must, however, have done it within a few years of the fight, and we may roughly say that the date of the original 'Gītā' is somewhere about 3100 B. C.

But it is clear that the work as it is before us is not exactly that of Vyāsa. We know for certain that the original work of Vyāsa, called 'Jaya' or Victory (ततो जयमुदरियेत्, जयो नामेति हासोऽपय्) was twice recast or further expanded, once by Vaiśampāyana, who related 'Bhārata' to Janamejaya, and again by Sauti, who related it to Śaunaka and other Brahmins in Naimiṣāraṇya. This work has three names, viz. 'Jaya', 'Bhārata', and 'Mahābhārata', and the extent of the 'Bhārata', of Vaiśampāyana is also given as 24,000 ślokas, while that of the Mahābhārata is, as is well-known, one lakh of verses. The original of the 'Gītā', no doubt, belonged to the 'Jaya' (Victory) of Vyāsa; but the work as it is before us belongs, in our opinion, most certainly, to the 'Bhārata' of Vaiśampāyana, and not to the Mahābhārata of Sauti. The arguments for this view are given at length in the last chapter of Mahābhārata-Mīmāṃsā; but it may here be stated briefly that the greatness

of this work is described even in the Mahābhārata itself, wherein it is related that Arjuna again asked Śrī Kṛṣṇa to teach him what was taught on the battlefield. But Śrī Kṛṣṇa answered: " What I told you then, being in the required 'Yogic mood (योगयुक्तेन चेतसा), I cannot tell you again. I will

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tell you, however, another episode". And thus the 'Anugītā' is introduced in the Mahābhārata. Then, again, the verses in the 'Gītā' are constantly repeated in the Mahābhārata through-out its length as of some authoritative work. It is hence certain that the 'Gītā' does not belong to the Mahābhārata of Sauti but it belongs to the 'Bhārata' of Vaiśampāyana. The date of the former is conceded to be about 250 B. C. as shown at length in " Mahābhārata-Mīmāṃsā " (Chapter I); but the date of Vaiśampāyana's 'Bhārata' cannot be indubitably fixed, and hence the date of the 'Gītā', as it is to-day, is uncertain.

But, there are various arguments which point to 1400 B. C. speaking roughly in centuries, as the probable age of the 'Gītā'. In the first place the language of the 'Gītā,' strikes one as a spoken language and not classical Sanskrit of the time when it was dead and spoken only by Pandits. We know that Buddha preached his new religion to the people in Pali, a Prakrit; and hence it is certain that in his time Sanskrit was dead as a

spoken language of the common people. The 'Gītā', therefore, precedes Buddha of 500 B. C. Again, there is no reference to Buddhism in the 'Gītā', though there are many references to the doctrines of Buddhism in the 'Mahābhārata'. Some people think that in Chapter XVI there is a reference to Buddhist tenets in the description of the Āsurī character. But this is a description of Atheists. For Buddhism is in favour of Renunciation, and not the enjoyment of the world. On the other hand, there is not the least doubt that 'Gītā' is post-Upaniṣadic. The doctrine of Renunciation was first preached by the 'Bṛhadāraṇyaka' and it pervades the spirit of all the thirteen old Upaniṣads. It is clear the 'Gītā' is not for Renunciation. Indeed, Arjuna is actuated by that spirit when he asks the first and subsequent question in the Gītā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa sums His preaching in the pithy verse (संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ । तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥ Gītā. 5.2). This is wrongly interpreted by those who believe that the object of the 'Gītā' is to preach 'Saṁnyāsa'. Lokamanya Tilak has pointed out its true import, which is also the natural one. As the "Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad" must be dated 1900 B. C.

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roughly, as shown by Tilak from an astronomical statement in it, the 'Gītā' must be placed between 1900 B. C. and 500 B. C.



This is a wide range, no doubt; but it supplies one with limits, which are certain and unassailable.

There are a few arguments which will give us a more definite approximation to the probable date. It has been rightly shown by some scholars that the 'Gītā' is not only pre- Buddhistic but pre-Pāṇinīan. Many forms in it are against. Pāṇinī's rules. More interesting still is (मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहम्) as the month names are modern and not Vedic names, new names being introduced about 2,000 B. C. according to Shanker Balkrishna Dikshit. But, according to Vedāṅga Jyotiṣa, the first month is Māgha, and hence the 'Gītā' seems to be prior to the 'Vedāṅga Jyotiṣa' also, the date of which is about 1190 B. C. even according to the calculation of Archbishop Pratt, who worked the date out for Max Müller. Dikshit takes its date to be about 1400 B. C. It may thus be taken without much difficulty that 1400 B. C. is the probable date of the Gītā.

Another sentence furnishes a further argument in favour of this date. It may be accepted that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was already considered a divine being, indeed as an incarnation of the Highest Deity at the time of the Gītā; but not probably Arjuna. Yet, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa says ('वृष्णीनां वासुदेवोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनञ्जयः',), he lays the foundation of Arjuna-worship. From Pāṇinī's Sūtra ('वासुदेवार्जुनाभ्यांकम्'), we are sure that during

Pāṇinī's time both Vāsudeva and Arjuna were worshipped, though Arjuna lost his position later on. Gītā is therefore pre-Pāṇinīan undoubtedly. If we take the date of Pāṇinī to be about 800 B. C., as most Indians Scholars do, though Europeans scholars place him about 300 B. C, we may take, the Gītā to about 1200 B. C. or at least to 1,000 B. C. When we further remember that Śrī Kṛṣṇa identifies Himself with Mārgaśīrṣa as being the first of months, as in other things, we can take the Gītā, still further back, i.e., about 1,400 B. C., before the latest possible date for Vedāṅga Jyotiṣa.

The exact age of the Gītā is, no doubt difficult to determine for want of detailed knowledge of the political, social and religious history of India, before Buddha. The

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doctrine of Ahimsā is preached no doubt in the Gītā. But it is not the doctrine of Buddha. It had already been preached by the Upaniṣads (अहिंसन् सर्वाणि भूतान्यत्र तीर्थेभ्यः Chāndogya), and the Gītā keeps to it. Himsā in sacrifice is not Himsā as Hindus then believed. Buddha prohibited it altogether. This religious question is not at the root of the teaching of the Gītā. The question which was agitating Arjuna was wholly a moral one; and related, not to the slaughter of animals in sacrifices to God but to the slaughter of men in battle, slaughter of even

relatives even in a just war. The question was only a moral or a political one no doubt; but in India all questions are only a part of the great question: what is the duty of man in this life both from the worldly point of view and the view of the highest goal of human existence? It was hence necessary that the question should be discussed fully from these points of view and the Bhagavad-Gītā discusses it so thoroughly from all sides and in such a simple yet eloquent manner, in language so deep and meaningful, that the Gītā will always remain at the head of religious, philosophical and moral treatises. The answer of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to the vital question which is at the root of the Gītā is remarkable. The view is summed up at the end in the verse:

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।

हत्वापि स इमाल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥ Gītā.(18.17).

(Extract from Mr. C. V. Vaidya's article in the Kalyan Kalpataru, Gītā Number, 1935. Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, INDIA.)

### **(13) MRS. SOPHIA WADIA. GĪTĀ-JAYANTI.**

It is computed that Mokṣada Ekadasi— the eleventh day of Marga-Sirsa, which is auspicious to those seeking spiritual realization— was the day when Sri Krisna began to deliver on the field of duty His Sermon to the mentally confused Arjuna. Therefore that day is regarded as the birth-day of the Gita. Very many Hindus celebrate this day - Gita-Jayanti. The

Bhagavad-gita is revered as the song of life, and its reciters and

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readers are said to attain fortune, victory, prosperity and righteousness. That its doctrines emancipate the human soul and enlighten it with Wisdom and Peace is a well-recognized fact.

The message of the Gita has a universal appeal. Its teachings are fundamentally psychological and practical; they are addressed to man, the thinker, from whom no blind belief in them is demanded, but whose reason is kindled into conviction. The Gita is a drama; its characters are human passions and principles in Nature personified. Its historical back-ground and martial 'melange' have misled some, but more and more is it being recognized that the Gita symbolizes the eternal struggle between the material and the spiritual in every human being. Any thinking individual is capable of recognizing that the story of the Gita is the story of life. The more one listens to the Song of life, the more one realizes that it is the song of his own life. Thus the Gita is understood by each thinking soul in his own way, according to his own stage in evolution. To each the Gita offers the solution of his own

problems. Thus any deluded mortal of any community using the lessons taught can become enlightened and immortal.

The Gita has not only universal appeal; its influence is universalizing. It may be regarded as the book of democracy; it teaches that Spirit is the seed of all, and in the hearts of all beings It is rooted. The pure democratic doctrines of the Gita do not advocate any process of levelling down all human beings to an equality in material things; they advocate the realization of an existing unity in Spirit, Which manifests as harmony in diversities. The socialism of the Gita is founded on the maxim of noblesse oblige and the method of attaining it is by the unfoldment of nobility at every stage and in every station of life. The social philosophy of the Gita recognises the divisions and differences of the human kingdom, and it does not attempt the impossible task of doing away with or ignoring them; it teaches their meaning and purpose, and reveals that they are but the results of the natural processes of evolution. Thus, for example, the Gita does not say that castes and classes are useless and should be destroyed; it explains Varnas or castes

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from the point of view of the soul; they are expressions of varying qualities of the evolving human consciousness. By

merit and merit alone a man is of high or low caste or class, and, birth, family, religion or wealth do not determine the soul's station in life; its own qualities bespeak its stage of evolution. By self-control and self-effort any sinner can become pure.

The inspiration of the Gita produces a series of progressive awakenings, but all of them result in reliance on the Self within, which is perceived as the Inner Ruler. No prophet, no priest can save that Self; no king, no emperor can have power over it. It is its own saviour and holds sway over its own kingdom of the mind, its own empire of the heart. Thus the Gita destroys priest-made orthodoxy and sectarianism, but does not leave the man barren and lonely; for it brings to him the companionship of the Sage and the Prophet. It illuminates for the Muslims his Koran, for the Parsi his Avesta, for the Christian his Bible. These are no more regarded as infallible books, but as avenues leading to the understanding and appreciation of their great recorders. For example, the teaching about Sraddha will purify and deepen the faith of the Muslims; the austerities and mortifications of body, speech, and mind, will make the Zoroastrian more enlightened about the triad of good deeds, good words, and good thoughts, which he reveres; the Sikh's martial ardour, the Jain's gentleness, will become more elevated qualities; the Christian will learn why ordinarily he is not able to live up to the Sermon on the Mount, and by what stages he can reach the position

where he will be able to do so; and so on. That which is the force of evil in every religion will weaken, and the unifying spirit of true religion, will become more and more manifest.

The principle of democracy, in which each grade of intelligence has its duties to discharge, contributes substantially to the unfoldment of the quality of self-reliance. The philosophy of the Gita is the philosophy of responsibility to neighbour and stranger, to country and race, to the whole of nature, visible and invisible; its practice resolves itself into the Religion of Duty. The performance of duties requires a discern-

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merit of what are not our duties; otherwise like Arjuna, we shall want to run away from our real duty, thinking that it consists in giving way to the enemy within and making peace with the wrong-doer in the world. The Gita has a unifying force; that power can bind men and women of different religions into a single whole; for, he who practises self-control, who attempts purification of his own thoughts, words and deeds, who endeavours to live his days and years in an enlightened manner, comes in unison and harmony, unconsciously to himself, with all others who are engaged in the same task.

To make the celebration of " Gita-Jayanti" an institution, we must first restore the book to its original position, from which it has fallen to assume a sectarian character. It is not a religious code but a spiritual poem; its teachings, both metaphysical and ethical, have naught to do with religious rites, priests or temples; it is not other-worldly – it deals with the problems of life in this world. Its message is clear, its language is simple, and no man needs an intermediary to approach it or to appreciate it. It is not fragmentary and there are no lacunae to be filled up by some expounder or by some study of other texts. It itself is perfectly rounded off; in itself it is complete. It grades off gently to depth after depth in the mighty ocean of wisdom. It rises tier over tier like an awe- inspiring mountain. Any man, any woman, in the East as in the West, can find his or her own place in its scheme, the very next step to be taken by him, the way to take that step, and the way to keep on progressing.

The right approach to the Gita consists in having our mind: fresh to penetrate its verses. The effect is magical.

(Extract from Mrs. Sofia Wadia's article in the Kalyan Kalpataru, Gītā Number 1935, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur. INDIA).



# TRANSLATOR'S FOREWORD.

It is with a feeling of relief, and of satisfaction at having discharged my duty (*kartavya*), that I am laying down the pen on the last line of the translation of the Gītā-Rahasya.

In completing this volume, I have adhered to the General Rules of Translation printed at page xxxix of Volume I, which I have re-printed at pp. vii-viii of this Volume for the convenience of the readers. Notwithstanding the suggestion made in some of the reviews of Volume I of this translation, that a free rendering of the text would appeal more to the public, I have followed the standard rule of translation, namely, of faithfulness to the text, with due regard to the idiom of the language into which the text is translated; because, my aim has not been to give the public what they would like to have, but what they ought to, and are entitled to have.

The generality of the reviewers of Volume I have not, I am glad to feel, attacked the philosophy of the author or his conclusions as to the Path of Life preached by the Bhagavad-Gītā.<sup>^</sup> And I have been much encouraged in the preparation of this Volume by the appreciatory and heartening reception, which has been accorded to Volume I.

It would be outside the scope of my commission to express any opinion in this Foreword on the conclusions of Author regarding the Message of the Gītā .

In spite of scrupulous care taken in going over the proofs, some mistakes have inevitably crept in; but they are so patent, that I have not considered it necessary to add a list of errata and corrigenda.

Part II the Index Of Definitions (Terminological Express- ions), has been compiled by me by way of cross-reference to Part I; and it is hoped that it will serve the purpose of those of my readers, who know the Terminological Expressions only in English, and cannot understand them in Sanskrit. For the education, however, of these readers, I have added

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after the English word, the actual Sanskrit terminological expression for which it stands in the translation, wherever I have considered that necessary.

In concluding, I wish to express my sincere appreciation of the trouble taken by the Bombay Vaibhava Press in putting the

Second Volume through the Press with the greatest possible speed, which was consistent with the correct printing of the copy; and of the consistent courtesy shown and the ungrudging help given to me in the matter of proofs and of carrying out the corrections.

I am glad to see that this Volume is going to be published on the auspicious Rāma-Navami day, which happens, incidentally, to be the birth-day of the Publisher Mr. R. B. Tilak.

ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ।

~ B. S. SUKTHANKAR.

Maha-Shivaratri, 22nd February 1936.

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# CHAPTER XIV.

## THE CONTINUITY OF THE CHAPTERS OF THE GĪTĀ

### (GĪTĀDHYĀYA-SAMGATI)

pravṛtti lakṣaṇam dharmam ṛṣir nārāyaṇo 'bravīt I [1]

~ Mahābhārata, Śānti. (217.2).

It will have been noticed from the Exposition made by me so far that the Bhagavadgītā, that is to say, the Upaniṣad sung by the Blessed Lord, has promulgated the following doctrine, namely, that (i) acquiring complete Equability of Reason by Realising the universal identity of the Ātman in all created things, whether by the Contemplation on the Absolute Self or by Devotion, while being engaged in Action, and (ii) continuing to perform all the various duties which have befallen one in

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[1] "The Ṛṣi Nārāyaṇa has preached an Energistic (pravṛtti- lakṣaṇam) doctrine (dharma)". This Ṛṣi is one of the two Ṛṣis Nara and Nārāyaṇa; and it has been mentioned before that Arjuna and Śrī Kṛṣṇa were their respective incarnations. I have quoted in the foregoing pages the statement in the Mahābhārata that the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine has been advocated in the Gītā.

worldly life according to the injunctions of the Śāstras, even after the acquisition of that Equability of Reason, without thinking of taking up Asceticism (saṁnyāsa), is the highest goal (puruṣārtha) or the best path of living one's life for man in this world. Nevertheless, as the order in which this Exposition has been made in this book, is different from the order adopted in the Gītā, it is necessary to consider succinctly in what way the whole of this subject-matter has been arranged in the Gītā. Any subject-matter can be dealt with in two ways; the one is the scientific method, and the other is according to the Purāṇas. Out of these, the method of explaining how the fundamental principles of the doctrine to be established can be derived from things which everybody easily understands by logically arranging and putting forward all the pros and cons of the doctrine under discussion, is known as the scientific

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(śāstrīya) method. Geometry is an excellent example of this method, and the method adopted in the Nyāya-Sūtras or the Vedānta-Sūtras falls into this class. Therefore, wherever the Bhagavadgītā refers to the Brahma-Sūtras or to the Vedānta-Sūtras, it is stated that the subject-matter expounded in those Sūtras has been expounded in the form of intentional and definite propositions; cf., "brahma-sūtra padaiś caiva hetu-madbhir viniścitaiḥ" (Gī. 13.4), (i.e., "this subject-matter has been expounded by stating the reasons (hetu), and the

conclusions, in absolutely definite words (pada) in the Brahma-Sūtras" ~Translator.). But although, the exposition of the subject-matter in the Bhagavadgītā is scientific, yet, it has not been made in this, that is, in a scientific way. The subject-matter in the Gītā has been described in the easy and entertaining form of a conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna; and therefore, at the end of each chapter, we find the words "śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde", (i.e., "in the conversation between. Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna" ~Translator.), which show the method of exposition adopted in the Gītā, after the words "Bhagavadgītā-sūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre ", (i.e., " of the Science of Yoga, included in the cult of the Brahman, expounded in the Upaniṣad sung by the Blessed Lord" – Trans). I have used the word 'paurāṇika' (i.e., "in the fashion of the Purāṇas" ~Translator.) with reference to the catechismal exposition, in order to clearly show the difference between that method of exposition and the scientific method. It would have been absolutely impossible to go into a thorough discussion of all the various matters which are included in a comprehensive word like 'dharma' (Morality) in such a catechismal or 'paurāṇika' exposition extending over only 700 stanzas. Yet, it is a matter of great surprise that all the various subjects, which arise in the Gītā, have been crammed together, without mutual conflict, in that way in the Gītā though succinctly; and this proves the wonderful skill of the author of the Gītā, and explains the propriety of the statement made in the beginning of the Anugītā, that the advice given in the Gītā

was given with an 'extremely Yogic (yoga-yukta) frame of mind'. There was no reason to explain once more in detail those matters which were already known to Arjuna.

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His chief difficulty was whether or not he should commit such a terrible act like warfare, and if so, how; and when Śrī Kṛṣṇa advanced any particular logical argument in His reply, Arjuna would raise objections to it. The exposition made in the Gītā in the form of this catechism is naturally very succinct or short in some places, whereas there have been repetitions in other places. For instance, the description of the developing-out of three-constituted Matter has appeared with slight differences in two places (Gī. Chap. I and XIV); whereas, although the description of the Sthitaprajña, the Bhagavad-bhakta, the Trigunātīta, and the Brahma-bhūta is one and the same, yet, the same has been repeated on different occasions from different points of view. On the other hand, the doctrine that 'artha' (wealth) and 'kāma' (desire), are proper when not inconsistent with dharma (Morality), has been enunciated in the single sentence "dharmāviruddhaḥ kāmo'smi" (7.11), (i.e., "I am that kāma (Desire), which is not contrary to dharma (Morality)" – Trans). In consequence, although all these various subjects have appeared in the Gītā, yet, the readers of the Gītā get confused as a result of their not being acquainted with the traditions of the ancient doctrines of the religion of

the Śrūtis, the religion of the Smṛtis, the Bhāgavata religion, the Sāṃkhya philosophy, the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, the Vedānta Philosophy, the Theory of Causality (karma-vipāka) etc., on the authority of which the Knowledge in the Gītā has been expounded; and as they do not really understand the method of exposition, they think that the Gītā, is something unintelligible; or that it must have been expounded before the scientific method of expounding things had come into vogue, and that there are, on that account, to be found inconsistencies or an incomplete exposition in various places in the Gītā; or that at any rate, the Knowledge expounded in it is inaccessible to their intelligence. If one refers to the various commentaries for clearing one's doubts, one gets all the more confused, since almost all the commentaries are in support of some doctrine or other, and it becomes extremely difficult to harmonise the mutually conflicting opinions of the commentators. I know several even very learned readers, who have got confused in this way. In order that such a difficulty

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should no more remain, I have so far expounded the various subjects described in the Gītā, by scientifically arranging them in a way I thought best. If I now explain how these various subjects have more or less figured in the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, by reference to the questions or doubts expressed by Arjuna, my whole Exposition will become

complete, and it will be easier for me to sum up the entire subject-matter in the next chapter.

My readers must first remember that the Gītā was preached by one omniscient, all-powerful, prosperous, and highly revered Kṣatriya to another powerful archer-warrior, in order to induce the latter to perform his duties according to the law of warriors at a date when our India was well-known on all sides as enjoying the happiness of Spiritual Knowledge, material wealth, worldly success, and complete self-government. Mahāvīra and Gautama Buddha, the protagonists of the Jain and Buddhist religions respectively, both belonged to the warrior class; yet, Śrī Kṛṣṇa did not, as was done by both of them, adopt only the Path of Renunciation from the Vedic religion, and open the door of the Path of Renunciation to all classes, including the warrior class; and the advice given in the Bhāgavata religion is that not only the warrior class, but even Brahmins must adopt the path of taking part in all worldly activities, till death, with a desireless frame of mind, while possessing the Peace (śānti) pertaining to the Path of Renunciation. But whatever advice is given, it is necessary that there should be some occasion for giving it; and in order that the advice given should become fruitful, a desire to receive the Knowledge of that advice must, in the first place, have arisen in the mind of the disciple. Therefore, in order to explain both these things, Vyāsa has explained in detail in the FIRST CHAPTER of the Gītā, the occasion for Śrī Kṛṣṇa to give this

advice to Arjuna. The armies of the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas were standing on the field of Kuru, to fight with each other, and the fight was about to start, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa, at the desire of Arjuna, took and left his chariot in the middle of both the armies, and said to him, "look at these Bhīṣma, Droṇa, and others with whom you have to fight". Then, when Arjuna had looked at both the

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armies, he saw that his own ancestors, uncles, grand-fathers, maternal uncles, brethren, sons, grand-sons, friends, relatives, preceptors, co-disciples etc. were ranged on both sides, and that all of them would be killed in the war! It was not that the war had sprung up suddenly. The decision to fight had been arrived at, and the recruiting of the armies on both sides had been going on for many days. Nevertheless, when Arjuna saw the realistic vision of the destruction of the entire clan by this internecine war, even a great fighter like him felt unhappy, and he said:— "Alas! are we going to bring about this terrible destruction of our own clan in order that we should get the kingdom? Is it not better to beg?" And he said to Śrī Kṛṣṇa: "It does not matter if I am killed by my enemies; but, I do not wish to commit terrible sins like patricide, or the murder of one's preceptors, or fratricide, or the destruction of the entire clan, ever if I were to get the kingdom of the three worlds". His body began to tremble, he lost control over his limbs, his

mouth became dry, and with a very unhappy face, he threw down his bow and arrows and sat down in his chariot. This part of the story is mentioned in the first chapter, which is called the 'Yoga of the Dejection of Arjuna'; because, although the whole of the Gītā deals with only one subject-matter, namely,, 'the philosophy of Karma-Yoga included in the cult (vidyā) of the Brahman', the subject-matter principally described in each chapter is looked upon as a portion of this philosophy of Karma-Yoga, and each chapter is, with reference to the subject-matter in it, called this Yoga, that Yoga etc. And all these Yogas taken together, make up the entire 'Philosophy of Karma-Yoga included in the cult (vidyā) of the Brahman'. I have explained in the beginning of the book the importance of the first chapter of the Gītā; because, if one does not clearly understand at the outset what the question before one is, one cannot also clearly understand the answer to that question. If the sum and substance of the Gītā is to be understood as being that one should abandon worldly life, and take either to Devotion to the Blessed Lord, or the Path of Renunciation, then there was no necessity to give that advice to Arjuna, as he was ready to give up the terrible warfare of his own accord and to go begging round the world. The author of the Gītā could have



put into the mouth of Śrī Kṛṣṇa a stanza or two containing such words as: "Hullo! what a nice thing you have said! I am very glad to notice your repentance! Come; let us both give up this worldly life which is full of Action, and redeem our respective Selves by the Path of Renunciation or the Path of Devotion!"; and he could have thus ended the Gītā. Then, if the war had taken place thereafter, and Vyāsa had mis-employed his speech by spending three years (Ma. Bhā. Ā. 62.52) in describing it, Arjuna and Śrī Kṛṣṇa at any rate would not have, been to blame for it. It is true that the thousands of warriors, collected together on the battle-field of Kuru, would have derided Arjuna and Śrī Kṛṣṇa; but, would a man who was bent on redeeming his own Self, pay even the slightest attention to such derision? Whatever the world said, the Upaniṣads themselves have said:— "yad ahar eva virajet tad ahar eva pravrajat" (Jā. 4), i.e., "that moment when you repent, that very moment you should renounce the world, and not delay the matter". Even if one says that the repentance of Arjuna was not based on Self-Realisation, but on Ignorance (moha), yet, the fact that there was a repentance at all, would finish half the task; and it was not impossible for the Blessed Lord to remove his Ignorance and to give that repentance the foundation of Knowledge. Even among those who follow the Path of Renunciation or the Path of Devotion, there are examples of persons who have given up worldly life, as they had for some reason or other got tired of such life, and later on obtained complete perfection; and Arjuna could have been

dealt with in the same way. One could easily have found in the field of Kuru, the handful of saffron colour necessary for colouring the clothes of Arjuna like those of a Saṁnyāsin, or the cymbals, drums, and other instruments necessary for him for singing the praises of the Blessed Lord.

But instead of doing so, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has on the contrary said to Arjuna in the beginning of the SECOND CHAPTER that: "O Arjuna, whence have you got this disastrous idea (kaśmala)? This impotency (klaibya) is unworthy of you! your reputation will go to dogs! therefore, give up this weakness (daurbalya) and stand up and fight!" But when in spite of that advice, Arjuna reiterated his previous unmanly

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tale of woe, and said to Śrī Kṛṣṇa with a pityful expression on his face: "how shall I kill such great and noble-souled persons like Bhīṣma, Droṇa etc.? My mind is confused by the doubt as to whether it is better to die or to kill them; therefore, tell me which of these two paths is the more meritorious; I am surrendering myself to You", Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw that Arjuna was completely under the sway of this despondence; and smiling a little, He started imparting Knowledge to him with the words "aśocyān anva śocas tvaṁ etc.". Arjuna wanted to act like a Jñānin (scient), and was boasting about Renunciation of

Action; and therefore, the Blessed Lord has commenced His advice with the description of the two paths (Niṣṭhās) of 'Abandonment of Action' and 'Performance of Action', which were being followed in the world by Jñānins; and He first tells Arjuna that whichever of the two paths was adopted by him, he would yet be wrong. HE then gives advice to Arjuna, upto the words, "eṣā te 'bhihitā sāmṁkhye buddhiḥ" etc. (Gī. 2.11 – 39), (i.e., "I have given this advice or Knowledge to you, or made this Exposition, according to the Sāmṁkhya system"~Translator.) regarding the Path of Knowledge or Sāmṁkhya system, on the basis of which Arjuna had begun to speak of Abandonment of Action; and then He tells Arjuna, upto the end of chapter, that fighting was his true duty consistently with the Path of Karma-Yoga. If some such stanza like "eṣā te 'bhihitā sāmṁkhye" had come before the stanza "aśocyān anva śocas tvam" etc., this same meaning would have been conveyed in a more pronounced way. But, it has come in the course of conversation, in the form of: "so far, I have explained the system of the Sāmṁkhyas, I shall now explain to you the philosophy of Karma-Yoga", after the exposition of the Sāmṁkhya system was over. In either case, the meaning is the same. I have clearly explained the difference between the Sāmṁkhya or Renunciatory path and the Yoga or Activistic path in the eleventh chapter above; and I shall, therefore, without repeating the same subject-matter here only say that, abandoning Action and taking to Asceticism for obtaining

Release, after a man has acquired Knowledge by performance of such Actions as are enjoined on the

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particular castes for the purification of the Mind, having regard to the different stages of life, is known as the Sāṃkhya path; and not abandoning Action at any time, but continuing the performance of Action desirelessly, so long as life lasts, is known as Yoga or Karma-Yoga, The Blessed Lord first says to Arjuna: "in as much as the Ātman is imperishable and immortal according to the Philosophy of the Absolute Self expounded in the Sāṃkhya system, this idea that you are going to kill Bhīṣma etc. is wrong in its very inception; because, the Ātman is not killed, nor does it kill. Just as a man changes one set of clothes and puts on another, so does the Ātman give up one body and take up another; that is all. But it is not right, on that account, to imagine that the Ātman is dead and to lament for it. Well; if, on the ground that the idea that 'I am going to kill' is an illusion, you ask Me, why you should fight at all, then, My answer is, that it is the duty of the warrior class not to withdraw from that warfare which befalls that class according to the Śāstras; and as even according to the Sāṃkhya philosophy, it is considered meritorious to perform. in the beginning all Actions which befall one according to the arrangement of the castes and the stages of life, people will find fault with you if you do not do so; nay, falling in the fight is

the duty of soldiers. Then why are you dejected? Give up the Karma-vision that 'I am killing and he is dying'; and perform that Action which befalls you in the course of life, with the idea that you are merely doing, your own duty, so that you will thereby incur no sin whatsoever". This is the advice given consistently with the Sāṃkhya philosophy. But that still leaves untouched the doubt, that it is better not to fight and to renounce the world, immediately on feeling the repentance (if possible), if, according to the Sāṃkhya doctrine, it is considered more meritorious to give up all Action and to renounce the world after the purification, of the Mind. These doubters say that it is not enough to reply that Manu and other Smṛti writers have dictated that one should renounce the world in old age, after having completed the state of a householder, and that one must live in the state of a householder in youth; because, if renouncing the world sometime or other is the most meritorious course of action, the

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proper course is to do so without delay, as soon as one gets tired of worldly life; and that is why there are such statements in the Upaniṣads as, "brahmacaryād eva pravrajat gṛhād vā vanād va" (Jā. 4), (i.e., "one should renounce the world whether in the state of a celibate, or a householder, or of a denizen of the woods " ~Translator.). That ultimate goal which

is to be obtained by renouncing the world is obtained by the warrior by falling on the battle-field. It is stated in the Mahābhārata that:–

dvāv imau puruṣavyāghra sūryamaṇḍala bhedinau ।  
parivāṅg yogayuktaś ca raṇe cābhimukho hataḥ ॥  
(Udyo. 32.65)

that is, "O, tiger in the shape of a man (puruṣavyāghra), there are only two persons who can pierce the constellation of the Sun and reach the sphere of the Brahman; the one is the Ascetic steeped in Yoga, and the other is the warrior who falls on the battle-field while fighting "; and we find a stanza conveying the same import in the book on Economics (arthaśāstra) by Kauṭilya, that is, by Cāṇakya, to the effect that:

yān yajña saṁghais tapasā ca viprāḥ  
svargaiṣiṇaḥ pātra ca yaiś ca yānti ।  
kṣanena tān apy ati yānti śūrāḥ  
prāṇān suyuddheṣu parityajantaḥ ॥ (Kauṭi. 10.3, 150 –  
153 and Ma. Bhā. Śān. 92 – 100)

that is: "Warriors, who give up their lives in warfare, go in a moment far beyond that sphere which is obtained after death by Brahmins desiring heaven, by means of many sacrificial offerings, or of austerities"; that is to say, that goal which is reached not only by austere ascetics or those who have renounced the world, but even by those who perform sacrificial ritual, is also reached by the warrior who falls on the

field of battle. This is the summary of the advice given in the Gītā to the effect that, "the gateway of heaven in the shape of war, is rarely found open by a warrior; if you die

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in the war, you will obtain heaven, and if you gain victory, you will obtain the kingdom of the world" (2.32, 37). Therefore, it could even be maintained, according to Sāṃkhya philosophy, that whether Arjuna took up Asceticism or fought, the result would be the same. Nevertheless, the definite conclusion that he must fight under any circumstances is not arrived at by the logical arguments advanced by the Sāṃkhya school. Realising this difficulty which would arise for Arjuna by following the Sāṃkhya philosophy, the Blessed Lord has after finishing with the exposition of the Sāṃkhya system, started with the exposition of the Path of Karma-Yoga; and, in order to clear to clear this doubt, the Blessed Lord has, upto the last chapter of the Gītā, expounded by giving various examples, this Karma-Yoga – that is, this position that Action must be performed, and that instead of such Action coming in the way of Release, such Release is, on the other hand, obtained while performing Action. 'The central principle of the Karma-Yoga is that in order to decide whether a particular Action is good or bad, one has first to see whether the Practical Reason (vāsanātmikā buddhi) of the doer was pure or impure, rather than considering the external effects of that Action (Gī. 2. 49). But, as the question

whether the Practical Reason (vāsanā) was pure or impure has ultimately to be decided by the Pure (or Discerning) Reason (vyavasāyātmikā buddhi), the Desire does not become pure and equable, unless the Discerning Reason is equable. It is, therefore, stated at the same time, that in order to purify the Practical Reason, one must also in the first instance steady the Discerning Reason by means of Concentration (Gī. 2.41). If one considers the ordinary activities of the world, the majority of people are seen, engrossed in the Vedic ritual or sacrifices etc., based on Desire, for the acquisition of various forms of happiness based on Desire; and on that account their Desire is seen to be keen to-day on obtaining this fruit or to-morrow some other fruit, that is, engrossed in selfish interests and constantly changing. But, such persons cannot possibly get the permanent happiness of Release, which is of greater importance than the transient result in the shape of heaven, etc. Therefore, the mystic import of the Path of

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Karma-Yoga is now explained to Arjuna (2.47 – 53) by his being told that: "give up this desire-prompted activity of Vedic Karma, and learn to perform Action desirelessly; your authority extends only to the performance of Action; obtaining or not obtaining the Fruit of Action is a matter which is never within your control (2.47); those who perform Action believing that the giver of the fruit is the Paramēśvara, and with the



equable frame of mind that it is same whether or not the Fruit of the- Action is obtained, are not affected by the sin or the merit of the- Action; therefore, acquire this Equable Reason; this Equability of Reason is known as Yoga – that is, the device of performing Action without thereby committing sin; when you have learnt this Yoga, you will obtain Release notwithstanding that you may be performing Action; it is not that Action has to be abandoned in order to attain Release" etc. After the Blessed Lord had explained to Arjuna that that person whose Reason had become equable in this way, was to be called a 'Sthitaprajña' (Steady-in-Mind), (2.53), Arjuna again asked the Blessed Lord to tell him how such a Sthitaprajña behaves. Therefore, the description of the course of life of such a Sthitaprajña has been given at the end of the second chapter; and it is ultimately said that the intellectual state of such a Sthitaprajña is known as the Brāhmī state (the state of being merged in the Brahman). In short, the advice given in the Gītā to induce Arjuna to fight has been started with the description of the two Niṣṭhās, which have become acceptable to Jñānins in this world, namely, the two paths of 'abandoning Action' (Sāṃkhya) and 'performing Action' (Yoga); and the war has first been justified on the basis of the Sāṃkhya system of philosophy; but, seeing that that argument was inconclusive, the science of Realisation according to the Path of Yoga or Karma-Yoga has been started immediately afterwards; and after having mentioned that even a little observance of this Karma-Yoga is highly meritorious, the Blessed Lord has in the

second chapter come to the stage of saying that in as much as the Reason which inspires the Karma is looked upon as superior to the Karma itself in the Path of Karma-Yoga, Arjuna should perform Actions after having made his Reason equable like that of a Sthitaprajña,

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so that he would not incur any sin. Let us now see what further questions arise. As the root of the whole of the exposition of the Gītā is in the second chapter, I have dealt with that matter somewhat at length.

The question of Arjuna at the beginning of the THIRD CHAPTER is: "if in the Path of Karma-Yoga, the Reason is superior to the Karma itself, then it will be enough if I make my Reason equable like that of a Sthitaprajña; why do you ask me to perform such a terrible act like war?". Because, saying that the Reason is superior to the Action, does not answer the question why war should be carried on, and why one should not renounce the world after making one's Reason equable. It is not that one cannot abandon Action (perform Karma-Saṁnyāsa) with an equable Reason. Then, where is the objection to an equable-minded person abandoning Action according to the Sāṁkhya Path? This question is now answered by the Blessed Lord by saying: "it is true that I have

mentioned to you the two paths of Sāṃkhya and Yoga; but no man soever can entirely give up Action. So long as he is clothed in a body, Matter (prakṛti) will by its inherent nature, compel him to perform Action; and if you cannot escape this Action, which is the result of Prakṛti, it is more meritorious to equabilise and steady your mind by exercising control over the organs, and to perform all your various duties merely by the organs of Action. Therefore, go on performing Action, for if you do not do so, you will not be able even to obtain food to eat (3.3 – 8). Action has been created by the Parameśvara; not by man. When Brahmadeva created the universe and all created beings, he at the same time also created the 'Yajña' (sacrificial ritual), and told the created beings that they should obtain their own welfare by means of this Yajña; and as those Yajñas cannot be performed without Action (karma), therefore, Yajña is nothing but Karma. Therefore, it must be said that man and Karma have been created at the same time. But, as the sole purpose of this Karma is the Yajña, and as the Yajña is the duty of man, therefore; the fruit of this Karma does not create a bondage for man. Now it is true, that a man who has become a Jñānin has no more any duty left to be performed for his own benefit; and at the

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same time, he is in no way concerned with other people. But, from this it does not follow, that one should not perform

Action; because, as nobody can escape Action, one comes to the necessary conclusion that such Action must now be performed desirelessly for the benefit of others, though it is not necessary to perform it for one's own selfish interests (Gī. 3.17 – 19). Bearing these things in mind, Janaka and other Jñānins have engaged in Action in ancient times, and I the Blessed Lord, am doing the same. Besides, bringing about 'lokasaṁgraha' (universal welfare), that is, putting people on the path of self-amelioration by placing before their eyes a good example in the shape of one's conduct, is one of the most important duties of Jñānins (Scientists). However Knowledgeful a Jñānin may be, he does not escape the activities of Prakṛti; therefore, far from giving up Action, it is more meritorious to even lose one's life, if necessary, while performing Actions as duties according to one's own religion (dharma), (3.30 – 35)". Such is the advice which the Blessed Lord has given in this chapter. Seeing that the Blessed Lord had in this way placed the entire responsibility of Action on the shoulders of Prakṛti, Arjuna next asks why a man commits sin, though he has no desire to do so. In reply the Blessed Lord has said that kāma (Desire), krodha (anger), and other mental emotions forcibly stupefy the mind; and that, therefore, everybody should control his mind by controlling the organs; and He has then closed the chapter. In short, after establishing the necessity of the Karma-Yoga by saying that (i) though the Reason may have become equable like that of a Sthitaprajña, no one can escape Karma and that (ii) Karma must be

performed desirelessly, for universal benefit (lokasaṁgraha), if not for one's own self-interest, the Blessed Lord has by saying, "Dedicate all Actions to me" (3.30 – 31) given in this chapter the first glimpse (sūta uvāca) of the central principle of the Path of Devotion, namely, of performing all Actions with the idea of dedicating them to the Parameśvara.

Nevertheless, this subject-matter has not been exhausted in the third chapter, and the FOURTH CHAPTER has been started for further dealing with the same subject. In order that Arjuna should not think that the disquisition made so far

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was something, new, which had been invented by the Blessed Lord merely for the purpose of inducing him to fight, He has in the beginning of the fourth chapter mentioned the tradition of this Karma-Yoga, that is, of the Bhāgavata or Nārāyaṇīya religion, in the Tretāyuga. After the Blessed Lord had said to Arjuna that in the beginning of the Yuga (i.e., "ādaṁ"), He had taught this Path of Karma-Yoga to Vivasvān, Vivasvān to Manu, and Manu to Ikṣvāku, but that as it had been lost in the interim, He had again preached the same Yoga (the Path of Karma-Yoga) to Arjuna, Arjuna rejoined by asking how the Blessed Lord could have been in existence before Vivasvān. In reply to that question, the Blessed Lord has accounted for his

several incarnations by saying that He had to take those incarnations for protecting saints and destroying evil-doers and establishing the true religion; and He has justified the Karma-Yoga by saying that though He was in this way performing Action for universal welfare (lokasaṁgraha), He had not acquired or suffered for the merit or the sin of the Action, because He was not attached to the Action; and saying to Arjuna that Janaka and others had in ancient times followed that Yoga, understanding the underlying principle of it, He has advised Arjuna to do the same thing. He has here repeated the doctrine of the Mīmāṃsā school mentioned in the third chapter that "Action (karma) performed for sacrificial ritual does not create bondage"; and pointed out that (i) though throwing sesamum rice, etc., into the fire or slaughtering animals, was a kind of sacrifice, yet, it was a sacrifice of a lower order, being merely a sacrifice of wealth, and that (ii) burning all such mental emotions, as desire, anger, etc., into the fire of self-control or sacrificing all Action into the Brahman with the words, 'na mama' (i.e., 'this is not mine ') were sacrifices of a higher order; and having in this way given a more detailed and comprehensive definition of the word 'Yajña', the Blessed Lord now advises Arjuna that all Actions should be performed giving up the Hope for Fruit for the purpose of this Yajña. Because, although Actions performed for the purpose of the Yajña do not by themselves create bondage according to the Mīmāṃsā doctrine, yet, one cannot escape obtaining the fruit

of the Yajña; and, therefore, if even the Yajña itself is performed desirelessly, neither the Actions performed for the purpose of the Yajña, nor the Yajña itself will create bondage. The Blessed Lord has ultimately preached that (i) the Realisation (jñāna) that all created things are located in one's self, or, in the Blessed Lord, is known as 'Equability of Reason'; that (ii) when this Realisation has come, all Actions are reduced to ashes and do not bind the doer; that (iii) "sarva karmākhilam pārtha jñāne parisamāpyate", i.e., "all Action is ultimately merged in Knowledge"; that (iv) Action by itself does not create bondage, which results from Ignorance, and that (v) therefore, Arjuna should give up Ignorance; and follow the path of Karma-Yoga and stand up to fight. In short, the subject-matter of JÑĀNA. (Knowledge) [1] has here been introduced in this chapter by saying that in order to successfully follow the Path of Karma-Yoga, Knowledge in the form of Equability of Reason is necessary.

It is true that the reasons why Action should be performed, that is, the necessity of the Karma-Yoga, has been explained in the third and fourth chapters; but as, already in the second chapter, after explaining the Knowledge contained in the

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[1] The word 'Knowledge' has been used by me throughout as synonymous with 'Realisation' for translating the word 'Jñāna'. ~Translator.

Sāṃkhya philosophy, the Blessed Lord has, even in the course of the description of the Karma-Yoga, said over and over again that the Reason was superior to the Action, it now becomes necessary to explain which of these two paths is superior. Because, if one says that both the paths are of equal importance, it follows that people are free to choose whichever of the two paths they prefer, and that it is not necessary to follow only the Path of Karma-Yoga. This very doubt came into the mind of Arjuna and he has, in the beginning of the FIFTH CHAPTER, said to the Blessed Lord, "Do not mix up the two paths of Sāṃkhya and Yoga, but tell me definitely which of the two is superior, so that it will be convenient for me to act accordingly "; and the Blessed Lord has removed the doubt of Arjuna by saying that though both the paths are equally productive of Release, yet, the Path of

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Karma-Yoga is the better one of the two – "karma-yogo viśiṣyate", (i.e., "Karma-Yoga is the better one" ~Translator.), (5.2). For further emphasising this doctrine, the Blessed Lord also says that, not only does one attain by means of Karma-Yoga the same Release which can be attained by Renunciation or by the Sāṃkhya Path, but that unless the desireless frame of mind prescribed in the Karma-Yoga is acquired, Renunciation itself is useless; and that once such a desireless frame of mind is acquired, one does not fail to attain the



Brahman, notwithstanding that one may be performing Action according to the Path of Yoga. Then, where is the sense of raising a hue and cry that the Sāṃkhya Path is different from the Yoga Path? If one cannot abandon the hundreds of Actions, which one usually performs, such as, walking, speaking, seeing, hearing, smelling, etc., even if one wants to give them up, then the wisest course is not to take the trouble of abandoning Action, but to perform it with the idea of dedicating it to the Brahman. Therefore, true philosophers continue performing Actions desirelessly, and thereby ultimately acquire Peace (śānti) and Release (mokṣa). The Īśvara does not ask you either to give up Action or to perform Action. All this Action is the manifestation of Prakṛti; and as bondage is a characteristic of the Mind, the man, who performs Action after he has become Equable in Reason, that is, after he has become "sarvabhūtātmanabhūtātma", (i.e., "the Self which is identical with the Self (Ātman) of all created beings" ~Translator.), is not bound thereby. It is stated, in short, at the end of this chapter that (i) the man whose Mind has become equable towards the dog, the Cāṇḍāla, the Brahmin, the cow, the elephant, etc., and who has started performing his various activities after having realised the identity of the Ātman (Self) embodied in all created things, obtains Release in the shape of brahma-nirvāṇa wherever he is; that (ii) it is not necessary for him to go anywhere else for the purpose, or to look out for some other means for obtaining

Release; and that (iii) he is always free, unbound, and Released.

The same subject-matter is continued in the SIXTH CHAPTER, and the Blessed Lord has here explained in what

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way that Equable Reason can be acquired by which, one can obtain success in the practice of Karma-Yoga. In the very first stanza, the Blessed Lord has expressed His firm opinion that the man who performs all Actions which fall to his share, as duties, and without entertaining the Hope of Fruit, is the true Yogin, or the true Samñyāsin; and that the man who sits quiet giving up the worship of the Fire (agni-hotra) etc. is not the true Samñyāsin. HE then goes on to explain the principle of the Independence of the Ātman by saying that whatever Action has to be performed in the shape of the control of the organs, for steadying the Mind, according to the philosophy of Karma-Yoga, must be performed by oneself; and that if one does not do so, one cannot properly blame anybody else; and after this, there is in this chapter principally a description of how Yoga in the shape of the control of the organs can be acquired according to the Pātañjala-Yoga-Śāstra. It is further stated in this chapter that it is nevertheless not enough to merely control the organs by means of religious observance (yama)

restraint of the Mind (niyama), physical postures (āsana), control of the breath (prāṇāyāma), etc.; and the necessity of the Realisation of the universality of the Ātman has been emphasised in this chapter by saying that the frame of mind of the man must become Equable towards all created beings as described in the words "sarvabhūta-stham ātmānam sarvabhūtāni cātmani" (6.29), (i.e., "all created beings are located in one's Self and one's Self is located in all created beings" ~Translator.), or, in the words "yo māṁ paśyati sarvatra sarvaṁ ca mayi paśyati" (6.30), (i.e., "he who sees that I the Parameśvara am everywhere, and that everything is located in me" ~Translator.). At this juncture, Arjuna experiences the doubt that if this Yoga of Equability of Reason is not acquired in one life, it will become necessary to begin the whole thing over again in the next life, and the story will be repeated in every birth; and that on account of this recurrence in every life, it will not be possible to ever attain Release by this means. In order to remove this doubt, the Blessed Lord has explained, that nothing is wasted in the path of Karma-Yoga, that the impressions received in the previous birth are carried forward into the next birth in which the practice of Karma-Yoga can be carried on further, and that Release is

ultimately obtained by gradual degrees; and He has at the end of this chapter, again given to Arjuna a clear and definite advice, that as the Path of Karma-Yoga is in this way the most superior path, and one which is gradually accessible, Arjuna should eschew the various paths of performing Action as such (i.e., without giving up the Hope of Fruit), or the practice of austerities, or the abandonment of Action after Acquisition of Knowledge, and become a Yogin, that is, one who follows the Desireless Karma-Yoga.

Some persons are of the opinion that the exposition of Karma-Yoga has come to an end here, that is, at the end of the sixth chapter; that thereafter, the Blessed Lord has described the Path of Knowledge and the Path of Devotion as two 'independent' paths, that is to say, as paths which are mutually independent, or are the same in importance as the Karma-Yoga, but different from it, and as such, proper to be followed as alternatives for the Path of Karma-Yoga; that the Path of Devotion has been described from the seventh to the twelfth chapters and the Path of Knowledge in the remaining six chapters; and that if the eighteen chapters of the Gītā are divided up in this way, six chapters each can be allocated to Action (karma), Devotion (bhakti) and Knowledge (jñāna), and the Gītā becomes equally divided, amongst the three paths. But this opinion is wrong. It becomes clear from the opening stanzas of chapter V, that the question of Arjuna was (i) whether he should give up the fight having regard to the

principles of the Sāṃkhya philosophy, or take part in it though he saw the terrible consequences of it in front of his eyes; and; (ii) if, so, how the sin of it could be obviated; and this doubt was not going to be satisfied by giving an ambiguous and childish reply like: "Release can be obtained both by Knowledge and by Karma-Yoga", or, " if you want it, there is also the third path of Devotion". Besides, when Arjuna was asking for definite guidance about one particular course of Action, it would be incorrect to imagine that, omniscient and clever Śrī Kṛṣṇa avoided the issue and showed him three independent and alternative courses of Action. Really speaking, the Gītā

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considers only the two paths of 'Renunciation' (Saṁnyāsa), and 'Energism ' (Karma-Yoga), (Gī. 5.1); and there has been given the definite decision that out of the two, the Path of Karma- Yoga is 'the superior path (Gī. 5.2). Devotion has nowhere been mentioned as a third independent Niṣṭhā (Path of Release). Therefore, the theory of three independent paths of Spiritual Knowledge, Action, and Devotion, is a creation of doctrine supporting commentators; and as in their opinion the Gītā considers only the means of obtaining Release, they have evidently got the idea of these three paths from the Bhāgavata (Bhāg. 11.20.6). But these commentators have not realised that the conclusions reached in the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa are not

"the same as those in the Bhagavadgītā. Even the author of the Bhāgavata accepts the theorem that Release cannot be obtained by mere Action, and that Spiritual Knowledge is a necessity. But the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa says in addition that although Spiritual Knowledge and Desireless Action (naiṣkarmya) are both productive of Release, yet, both of them (that is to say, the desireless Karma-Yoga of the Gītā) are useless without Devotion – "naikarmyam apy acyutabhāvarjitam na śobhate jñānamalaṁ nirañjanam" (Bhāg. 12.12.52 and 1.2.12), (i.e., "Desireless Action unaccompanied by Devotion to the Unfallen (acyuta), does not befit pure and stainless Knowledge" ~Translator.). From this point of view, it is quite clear that the author of the Bhāgavata considers Devotion as the only true Niṣṭhā, that is, the ultimate Release-giving state. The Bhāgavata does not say that the Devotee of the Blessed Lord should not perform Action with the idea of dedicating it to the Īśvara, nor does it say that Action must be performed. The Bhāgavata says that whether one performs Desireless Action or not, these are all different varieties of the Path of Devotion (Bhāg. 3.29.7 – 19); and that if there is no Devotion, all Karma-Yogas will bring a person back to worldly life, that is, into the cycle of Birth and Death (Bhāg. 1.5.34, 35). In short, as the entire emphasis of the author of the Bhāgavata is on Devotion, he has included even the Desireless Karma-Yoga into the Path of Devotion, and maintained that Devotion is the only true Niṣṭhā. But, Devotion is not the principal subject-matter of exposition in the Gītā;

and therefore, interpolating this doctrine or terminology of the Bhāgavata into the Gītā is as improper as fixing the bark of a vaṭa-tree on a pippala-tree. Saying that Release cannot be obtained unless one has Realised the Parameśvara, and that Devotion is an easy way for such Realisation, is fully acceptable to the Gītā. But the Gītā does not insist on this particular path, and says that the Spiritual Knowledge, necessary for attaining Release should be obtained by every body by whichever path he finds easy; and the most important issue in the Gītā is whether or not one should perform Action after the Acquisition of Knowledge (Spiritual Knowledge); Therefore, the Gītā starts with the consideration of the two paths of 'taking part in worldly affairs' and 'abandoning, worldly affairs', which are both followed by the Birth-released (jivanmukta) in this world; and instead of naming the first of these two paths as 'Bhakti-Yoga' (the Device of Devotion), as has been done by the author of the Bhāgavata, the Gītā retains the terminology of the ancient Nārāyaṇīya doctrine by referring to the 'Performance of Action with the idea of dedicating it to the Parameśvara' as 'Karma-Yoga' or 'Karma-Niṣṭhā,' and to the 'Abandonment of Action after Acquisition of Knowledge as 'Sāṃkhya' or 'Jñāna-Niṣṭhā.' If one considers the matter, after accepting this terminology of the Gītā, Devotion can never become a third independent Niṣṭhā (path of Release) of the

same grade as Knowledge, or Action. Because, no third position about Karma can now exist except the two affirmative and negative paths of 'performing. Action' and 'not-performing, or abandoning, Action' (Yoga and Sāṃkhya). Therefore, if one has to determine what Niṣṭhā is followed by the Devotee, one cannot decide the matter by merely considering the fact that he follows the Path of Devotion; and one has to consider whether or not he performs Action. Devotion is only a means of reaching the Parameśvara; and although Devotion may be called a 'Yoga' in the sense that it is a 'sādhana' (means), (Gī. 14.26), yet, Devotion can never become an ultimate Niṣṭhā. If, after the Knowledge of the Parameśvara has been acquired by means of Devotion, a man continues to perform Action, he is called a 'Karma-niṣṭhā'; and if he abandons Action, he is called

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a 'Sāṃkhya-niṣṭhā'. And the Blessed Lord has clearly indicated his opinion in the fifth chapter, that out of these two paths, the path of performing Action is the more meritorious. But, the important objection of the School of Renunciation against Action is, that by performing Action, the Realisation of the Parameśvara is obstructed; and that Action must be abandoned, as there can be no Release unless the Knowledge of the Parameśvara has been acquired. It is stated in a general way in the fifth chapter that this objection is groundless, and



that one can obtain the same Release by the Path of Action, as can be obtained by the Path of Renunciation (Gī. 5.5). But, as this general proposition has not been fully developed in that chapter, the Blessed Lord is now dealing in the sixth chapter with the important question, namely, how the Knowledge of the Parameśvara, and ultimately Release, is obtained by Action, while Action is being performed, which question had been incompletely dealt with in the fifth chapter. That is why, instead of saying that the Path of Devotion is an independent path, the Blessed Lord has in the beginning of the seventh chapter said to Arjuna, that,

mayyāsakta manāḥ pārtha yogam yuñjan madāśrayaḥ |  
asamśayaṁ samagraṁ mām yathā jñāsyasi tacchṛṇu ||  
(Gī. 7.1).

that is, "Pārtha, listen to the way (which I am explaining to you) by which (yathā) you will undoubtedly acquire complete knowledge of Me, while you are following the Path of Yoga, that is, of Karma-Yoga, keeping your mind fixed on Me, and having surrendered yourself to Me"; and this very thing has been described in the next stanza as 'Jñāna-vijñāna' (Gī. 7.2). The words "yogam yuñjan" in the first stanza quoted above, namely, in the stanza "mayyāsaktamanāḥ", etc., which words (yogam yuñjan) mean, 'while you are performing the Karma-Yoga', are most important, but no commentator seems to have attached any great importance to those words. 'Yoga' is

necessarily the 'Karma-Yoga' which has been described in the first six chapters; and this stanza

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means that 'now', that is, from the seventh chapter, the Blessed Lord is starting a description of that path or 'vidhi' by which the complete knowledge of the Blessed Lord can be acquired while the man is practising this Karma-Yoga. That is to say, this stanza has been intentionally placed at the commencement of the seventh chapter, in order to show the relation between the first six chapters and the next chapter; therefore, it is highly improper to neglect this stanza and to say that "the Path of Devotion has been described as an independent path by itself after the first six chapters". Nay; I will even say that the words 'yogaṁ yuñjan' have been intentionally used in this stanza in order that such a misinterpretation should not be made by anybody. It has been shown in the first five chapters of the Gītā, after fully explaining the necessity of Karma (Action), that the Path of Action is superior to the Path of Renunciation; and then in the sixth chapter, the means mentioned in the Pātañjala-Yoga for acquiring that control over the organs which is necessary for the Karma-Yoga, have been described. But this does not exhaust the description of Karma-Yoga. Control of the organs is a kind of exercise for the organs of Action. It is true that by this exercise, one can keep one's organs under control; but if

the Desire of a man is sinful, having the control of the organs is useless; because, we see that when the Desire is sinful, many persons utilise the powers acquired by the control of the organs, for performing such sinful actions as propitiation (jāraṇa) or killing (māraṇa) etc. Therefore, it is stated in the sixth chapter that simultaneously with controlling the organs, one must also purify one's Desire so that one Realises that "sarvabhūtastham ātmānaṁ sarvabhūtāni cātmani" (i.e., "all created beings are located in one's self, and one's self is located in all created beings" ~Translator.), (Gī. 6.29). And this purification of Desire is impossible, unless one has Realised the purest form of the Parameśvara, by Realising the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman. In short, even if one has acquired the control of the organs necessary in the Path of Karma-Yoga, one does not thereby drive rasa, that is, the liking for objects of pleasure, out of the Mind. The Blessed Lord has stated already in the second chapter of the Gītā, that in order

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that this rasa or Desire for objects of pleasure (viṣaya-vāsanā) should go out of the Mind, one has to fully Realise the Parameśvara (Gī. 2.59). Therefore, that means, that is, vidhi, by which this Knowledge of the Parameśvara is acquired by a man, while he is following the Path of Karma-Yoga, is being described by the Blessed Lord from the seventh chapter. From the words, "while practising the Karma-Yoga", it follows that

this Knowledge has to be acquired while the Karma-Yoga is being practised, and that Karma or Action has not to be abandoned for acquiring that Knowledge; and therefore, the statement that the Paths of Devotion and of Spiritual Knowledge are two independent paths, which have been described from the seventh chapter onwards as alternatives for the Path of Karma-Yoga, is groundless. As the Karma-Yoga in the Gītā has been adopted from the Bhāgavata religion, the description of the vidhi (means) mentioned in the Karma-Yoga for the acquisition of Knowledge, is nothing but the description of the means mentioned in the Bhāgavata or the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine; and that is why Janamejaya has been told by Vaiśampāyana at the end of the Śānti-parva that "the Energistic (pravṛttipara) Nārāyaṇīya doctrine, together with the incidental forms of worship, have been described in the Bhagavadgītā " (see the stanzas quoted at the beginning of the first chapter). As said by Vaiśampāyana, this path also includes the vidhi (practices) relating to the Path of Renunciation; because, although the distinction between these two paths is, that in one of them, Karma has to be performed, whereas in the other, Karma has to be abandoned, yet, as the Spiritual and worldly Knowledge (jñāna-vijñāna) necessary in both is the same, the practices prescribed for acquiring Spiritual Knowledge are common to both. Therefore, in as much as, the express words "while following the Path of Karma-Yoga" have been used in the above stanza, it follows that (i) the exposition of Spiritual Knowledge (jñāna) and worldly Knowledge

(vijñāna) in the seventh and subsequent chapters is principally in support of Karma-Yoga; that (ii) the practices relating to the Path of Renunciation, which have been included in that jñāna-vijñāna have been so included on account of the comprehensive nature of that jñāna-vijñāna, and that (iii) this jñāna-vijñāna,

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has not been mentioned for supporting the Sāṃkhya Path and suggesting that Karma-Yoga should be abandoned. Another thing, which has to be borne in mind, is that though the followers of the Sāṃkhya school attach importance to Spiritual Knowledge, they attach no importance whatsoever to Action (karma) or Devotion (bhakti); whereas, Devotion has been looked upon as easy and important in the Gītā. Not only is that so, but even while dealing with the subjects of Spiritual Knowledge and Devotion, Arjuna is being constantly given the advice that "therefore, you must perform Action, that is, fight" (Gī. 8.7; 11.33; 16.24; 18.6). Therefore, one is forced to come to the conclusion that the exposition of jñāna-vijñāna in the seventh and the subsequent chapters of the Gītā is supplementary to, and in support of, the Path of Karma-Yoga mentioned in the first six chapters; and that those chapters do not contain any independent exposition of the Sāṃkhya Path or of the Path of Devotion. And when this conclusion has once been arrived at, the Gītā cannot be divided into three

mutually independent parts dealing respectively with Energism, Devotion, and Spiritual Knowledge. One also realises that the conclusion drawn by some persons from the two facts that (i) the sacred canon 'Tat-Tvam-Asi' has three parts, and that (ii) the Gītā, has eighteen chapters, that because six. times three is eighteen, the Gītā should be divided into three equal portions of six chapters each, and the first six chapters should be looked upon as dealing with 'Tvam', the second six chapters with 'Tat', and the third six chapters with 'Asi', is purely imaginary. Because, the one-sided theory that the whole of the Gītā deals only with the Acquisition of the Knowledge of the Brahman, and does not contain anything more than an exposition of the canon 'Tat-Tvam-Asi' falls to the ground as shown above.

When in this way, an explanation has been given as to why the Paths of Devotion and Knowledge have been included in the Gītā, one can easily understand the continuity between the chapters seven to seventeen inclusive, of the Gītā. It has been stated previously in the sixth chapter, that one has to consider the form of the Parameśvara, by which the Mind becomes 'free

from love of pleasure' (rasa-varja) and equable, once from the point of view of the Perishable and Imperishable (kṣarākṣara), and again from the point of view of the Body and the Ātman; and that, by such consideration, one arrives at the ultimate conclusion that " whatever is in the Body (piṇḍa), is also in the Cosmos (brahmāṇḍa); and the same subjects now appear in the Gītā. But, when one considers the form of the Parameśvara in this way, one sees that it is sometimes perceptible (cognisable by the organs) and sometimes imperceptible; and then, one has, in the course of this consideration, also to consider which of these two forms is the superior form, how the inferior form arises out of the superior form, and many other similar questions. One has also now to decide, whether this worship of the Parameśvara, which has to be performed in order to fully Realise the Parameśvara and to make one's Reason steady, equable, and Self-devoted (ātma-niṣṭha), should be the worship of the perceptible form or of the imperceptible form; and one has to explain why although there is only one Parameśvara, one comes across diversity in the perceptible universe. There is no wonder that eleven chapters were required to explain all these subjects in a systematic way. I do not say that the Gītā does not contain any exposition of Devotion and of Spiritual Knowledge. All that I say is that (i) the practice of looking upon Energism, Devotion, and Spiritual Knowledge as three independent and equivalent Niṣṭhās, and making an equal division of eighteen chapters of the Gītā amongst these three, as on a partition between the

members of a joint family, is not proper; that (ii) the Gītā supports only one path, namely, the Path of Karma-Yoga based on Knowledge, in which Devotion is the most important factor; and that (iii) the exposition in the Bhagavadgītā of Sāṃkhya philosophy, of Spiritual and worldly Knowledge, and of Devotion has been made only incidentally, for supplementing and supporting the exposition of the Path of Karma-Yoga, and not for dealing with those subjects as independent subjects. Let us now see how, on the basis of this conclusion, the subject-matter of Spiritual and worldly Knowledge (jñāna-vijñāna) has been divided amongst the various chapters, for supplementing and for emphasising the exposition

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of the Karma-Yoga.

In the SEVENTH CHAPTER, the consideration of the perishable and the imperishable world (kṣarākṣara), that is, of the entire Cosmos, has been started; and the Blessed Lord has, in the first place, explained the nature of the imperceptible or imperishable Parabrahman, by saying that this entire universe, which is made up of Spirit (puruṣa) and Matter (prakṛti), consists of "My superior and inferior (parāpara) forms, and that those who worship Me, Realising this My imperceptible form which is beyond Māyā, acquire an Equable Reason



(samabuddhi), and are given an excellent final state by Me"; and He has then described His own form by saying that, "all deities, all created things, all Yajñas, all Action, and the Absolute Self are Myself, and there is nothing in the world except Me ". Then, as Arjuna has in the beginning of the EIGHTH CHAPTER asked what is meant by 'adhyātma', 'adhiyajña', 'adhidaiva' and 'adhibhūta ', the Blessed Lord has in reply explained to him the meanings of those words, and said that, "I do not neglect that man who has realised this My form"; and He has then gone on to briefly explain what the imperishable or immortal Principle of the world is; when and how the entire world is destroyed; and what states are ultimately reached respectively by those who Realise and understand the true form of the Parameśvara, and by those who merely perform desire- prompted Action, without acquiring Knowledge. In the NINTH CHAPTER the same subject-matter is continued, and it is said that Realising by means of Devotion, the tangible form of the intangible Parameśvara, which has in this way filled the entire universe, and surrendering oneself to Him wholly and solely, is the easy or royal and practically experienceable path of Realising the Brahman; and that that very path is also known as the 'king of all cults' and the 'king of all mysticisms.' Nevertheless, the Blessed Lord does not forget to mention every now and then in these three chapters, that the person who is following the Path of Spiritual Knowledge or the Path of Devotion, must

continue performing Action, which is the most important principle in

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the Path of Karma-Yoga. For instance, it is stated in the eighth chapter, that "tasmāt sarveṣu kālēṣu mām anusmara yudhya ca", i.e., "therefore, continue to keep Me before your mind at all times, and fight" (8.7); and in the ninth chapter, that "by dedicating to Me all Action whatsoever, you will be free from the meritorious or evil effects of the Action" (9.27, 28). After explaining to Arjuna in the TENTH CHAPTER the statement made by Him earlier, that "the entire Cosmos has sprung from Me, and is My form", by saying that every one of the excellent things in the world is an incarnation of the Blessed Lord, and giving many examples, the Blessed Lord has, at the desire of Arjuna, actually shown to him in the ELEVENTH CHAPTER, His Cosmic form, and proved to him the truth of the position that the Parameśvara is All-pervading, by placing before his eyes such His Cosmic Form. But, immediately after having satisfied Arjuna in this way, by actually showing him His Cosmic Form, that the true doer was the Parameśvara, He has said to him: "I am the true doer and you are merely a tool; therefore, give up all doubts, and fight" (Gī. 11.33). Although it has been proved in this way, that there is only one Parameśvara in the world, yet, in as much as there are such statements in various places as: "although I am imperceptible, fools look upon me as

perceptible" (7.24); "yad akṣaram vedavido vadanti" (8.11), i.e., "Him, Whom the knowers of the Vedas, refer to as the Imperishable"; "It is the Intangible,, which is also known as the Inexhaustible" (8.21); "not Realising My true form, fools believe that I have taken up a human form" (9.11); "among all the cults (vidyā), the cult of the Absolute Self is the most excellent" (10.32); and, as said by Arjuna, "tvam akṣaram sadasat tat param yat" (11.37), (i.e., "You are the sat (Real), and the asat (Unreal), and the akṣara (Imperishable) which is beyond both sat and asat"~Translator.), which, statements mean that the imperceptible form of the Parameśvara is the most excellent form, Arjuna, in the beginning of the TWELFTH CHAPTER, asks the Blessed. Lord the question whether the worship of the Parameśvara which has to be performed, should be the worship of the perceptible form or of the imperceptible form. To this, the Blessed Lord replies that the perceptible form described in the

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ninth chapter is the easier one to worship; and after describing the state of the highest Devotee of the Blessed Lord as being similar to that of the Sthitaprajña, described in the second chapter, He closes this chapter.

Although it is seen in this way, that it is not possible to divide the Gītā. into three independent portions dealing with Energism, Devotion, and Spiritual Knowledge, yet, some people think that it is easy to divide the Spiritual and worldly Knowledge described from the seventh chapter into the two divisions of 'Devotion' and 'Knowledge'; and they say that the second division of six chapters deals with Devotion. But, anybody will realise after only a little thought, that this opinion is wrong; because, the seventh chapter starts with the Spiritual and worldly Knowledge of the perishable and the imperishable world, and not with Devotion; and if it is argued that the subject-matter of Devotion has come to an end with the twelfth chapter, then we find statements in different places in the subsequent chapters preaching Devotion, such as, "those who do not Realise My form by Intelligence, should worship Me, relying on the statements of others" (Gī. 13.25); "that man who offers me unadulterated Devotion, reaches the sphere of the Brahman" (14.26); "that man who Realises the form of the Puruṣottama, only offers Devotion to Me" (Gī. 15.19), and ultimately in the eighteenth chapter, "give up all other religions and worship Me" (Gī. 18.66). Therefore, it cannot be said that the advice to follow the Path of Devotion is contained only in the second division of six chapters. In the same way, if the Blessed Lord had intended to say that Devotion stood on a different footing from Spiritual Knowledge, then He would not have said "I am now explaining to you that same Spiritual and worldly knowledge" at the commencement of the seventh

chapter (7.2), that is to say, at the commencement of the second division of six chapters which, according to these objectors, deals with Devotion, after having introduced the subject-matter of Knowledge in the fourth chapter (4.34 – 37). It is true that the 'king of cults' (rāja-vidyā) or the 'king of mysticisms' (rāja-guhya), which is the actually realisable (pratyakṣāvagamyā)

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Path, of Devotion, has been mentioned in the subsequent ninth chapter; but at the very commencement of that chapter, there is a statement that: "I am explaining to you Spiritual Knowledge side by side with worldly knowledge" (9.1). It, "therefore, follows that the subject-matter of Devotion has been included in the Gītā in the subject-matter of Spiritual Knowledge. In the tenth chapter, the Blessed Lord has described his own Manifestations (vibhūti); but this very 'thing has been referred to by Arjuna as 'adhyātma' in the commencement of the eleventh chapter (11.1); and, as has been stated above, we find several statements that the imperceptible form is superior to the perceptible form, inter-mixed here and there with the descriptions of the perceptible form of the Parameśvara. When, having regard to these statements, Arjuna asks in the commencement of the twelfth chapter whether the worship to be performed is the worship of the Perceptible or of the Imperceptible, the Blessed Lord

has stated in reply, that the worship of the Perceptible, that is to say, Devotion, was the easier course; and immediately thereafter in the thirteenth chapter, He commences the description of ' Knowledge' (jñāna), and of the Body (kṣetra) and the Ātman (kṣetrajña); and He also says at the commencement of the fourteenth chapter that: "param bhūyaḥ pravakṣyāmi jñānānām jñānam uttamam" (14.1), i.e., "I am again describing to you completely that same Spiritual and worldly Knowledge", as was stated by Him at the commencement of the seventh chapter; and even while explaining this Knowledge, the thread of Devotion is kept running in the texture. From this it follows, that the Blessed Lord did not intend to deal with Spiritual Knowledge and Devotion individually and independently, and that both these matters are woven together in the exposition of the Spiritual and worldly Knowledge (jñāna-vijñāna) begun in the seventh chapter. That Devotion is something distinct and Spiritual Knowledge is also something distinct, is a stupid theory which has been started by the advocates of those respective paths; that is not the opinion of the Gītā. The Knowledge of the form of the Parameśvara, which has to be acquired by means of meditation on the Absolute Self in the Path of the worship of the Imperceptible

(the Path of Knowledge), is also essential in the Path of Devotion; but in the worship of the Perceptible (the Path of Devotion), this Knowledge can, in the beginning, be taken for granted by means of Faith from others (13.25); and that is why the Path of Devotion is actually realisable and ordinarily pleasant (9.2) for everybody, and the Path of Knowledge (or the worship of the Imperceptible) is difficult (12.5); but, the Gītā makes no other distinction between these two paths. The ideal in the Path of Karma-Yoga, namely, making the Reason (buddhi) equable after acquiring the Knowledge of the-Parameśvara, is reached by both these paths. Therefore, the worship of the Perceptible and the worship of the Imperceptible are both equally acceptable to the Blessed Lord; yet, as even the Jñānin needs to perform worship to some extent or other, the Blessed Lord has said, that the devout Jñānin is the most excellent one among the four varieties of Devotees (Gī. 7.17); and He has in that way eliminated the conflict between the Path of Devotion and the Path of Knowledge. While the description of Spiritual and worldly Knowledge is going on, it is, in any case, inevitable that there should be a special reference to the worship of the Perceptible in one chapter and to the worship of the Imperceptible in another chapter as occasion arises. But, in order that this should not give rise to the misunderstanding that these two matters are distinct, from each other, the Blessed Lord has not forgotten to say that the perceptible form is inferior to the imperceptible form, while describing His perceptible form, and

to say that Devotion is essential, while describing His imperceptible form. Nevertheless, as three or four chapters have been used. up in describing the Cosmic Form and the Manifestations of the Blessed Lord, there is no objection to these three or four chapters (and not to a division of six chapters) being referred to as 'the Path of Devotion' in a comprehensive way, if someone prefers to do so. But in any case, this can never mean that Devotion and Spiritual Knowledge have been distinguished, from each other in the Gītā, and that these two paths have been described as INDEPENDENT paths. In short, in order to acquire the Equability of Reason which is the most important factor in the Karma-Yoga, one must acquire the

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KNOWLEDGE of the all-pervasive form of the Parameśvara, whether such Knowledge is acquired by the worship of the Perceptible, or of the Imperceptible; and there is no distinction between the two except that of facility. It must, therefore, be borne in mind that this is the sum and substance of the whole of this argument; and that the whole of the portion of the Gītā from the seventh to the seventeenth chapter has been given only one name in the Gītā, namely, 'jñāna-vijñāna' or 'adhyātma'.



After the physical eyes of Arjuna had got the actual experience that the Parameśvara occupies and pervades the whole of the BRAHMĀNḌA (Cosmos), that is to say, the perishable and the imperishable universe, by having seen the Cosmic Form of the Parameśvara, the Blessed Lord explains, in the THIRTEENTH CHAPTER, the doctrine of the Body and the Ātman, namely, that the same Parameśvara occupies the PIṆḌA (Body), that is to say, the Body of man, or the kṣetra, in the shape of the Ātman; and that the Knowledge of this Ātman, that is to say, of this kṣetrajña, is also the Knowledge of the Parameśvara. Having first described the Paramātmān, that is, the Parabrahman, on the authority of the Upaniṣads by the words "anādi mat paraṁ brahma" etc., it is shown later on that the same subject-matter of the Body and the Ātman has been included in the Sāṁkhya exposition of 'Prakṛti' (Matter) and 'Puruṣa' (Spirit); and it is ultimately said that he who Realises the difference between Prakṛti and Puruṣa, and Realises the all-pervading Paramātmān, with 'jñāna-cakṣu' (Spiritual eyes) is RELEASED. But even in this, the thread of Action has been kept in the texture, by saying, "everything is done by Matter (prakṛti), and the Ātman is not the doer, and by Realising this, Action (karma) does not create bondage" (13. 29); and the thread of Devotion is kept in the texture, by saying "dhyānenātmāni paśyanti" (13. 24), (i.e., "see the Ātman by meditation" ~Translator.). In the FOURTEENTH CHAPTER, the subject of this Jñāna is continued, and there is a description as to how, although there is only one Ātman or Parameśvara,

diversity arises in the world as a result of the difference of the sattva, rajas and tamas constituents of Prakṛti, according to Sāṃkhya philosophy; and it

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is stated that, he who realises that these are the activities of Matter (prakṛti), and that he is not the doer, and who serves the Parameśvara by Devotion, is the true Released and Triguṇātīta (beyond the three constituents); and in reply to the question of Arjuna, the state of the Triguṇātīta is described in the end in the same way as was the state of Sthitaprajña and the Devotee. In the FIFTEENTH CHAPTER, there is in the beginning a reference to the description of the Parameśvara as a Tree, which is to be found in Smṛti texts, and it is stated that what is called the 'unfoldment of Prakṛti' in Sāṃkhya philosophy is nothing else but that Pipal (aśvattha) Tree; and at the end, Arjuna is told that by worshipping the Puruṣottama (the Absolute puruṣa), Who is beyond the Perishable and the Imperishable, man is gradually Released; and that Arjuna should do the same thing. In the SIXTEENTH CHAPTER, it is said that men are divided into those possessing Divine wealth and those possessing ungodly wealth, in the same way as there arises diversity in the world as a result of the different constituents of Matter (prakṛti); and there is a description of how they act respectively (what their Karma is), and what goal is ultimately respectively reached by them. The SEVENTEENTH

CHAPTER contains an Exposition, in reply to a question of Arjuna, of how the diversity resulting from "the different constituents of three-constituted Prakṛti is also to be seen in devotion, charitable gifts, sacrificial ritual, austerity etc.; and in the end, the word 'tat' in 'Om-Tat-Sat', the symbol of the Brahman, has been explained as meaning 'Action performed desirelessly'; and 'sat' as meaning 'Action, which, though good, has been performed desirefully'; and it is explained that this common Symbol of the Brahman also supports the Path of Karma-Yoga. In short, the summary of these eleven chapters is, that there is only one Parameśvara in the world, whether one Realises Him by seeing. His Cosmic Form or by one's Spiritual eyes; that He is the Ātman in the Body, as also the Imperishable. within the Perishable universe; that He pervades the visible world, and is also outside or beyond that world; that although He is One, one comes across diversity or difference in the visible world as a result of the difference in the constituents of Prakṛti; that as a result of this ,

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allusion (Māyā) or of this difference in the constituents of Matter, there are many differences or divisions in Knowledge, Faith, Austerity, Sacrificial Ritual, Steadiness, Charity, as also among men; and that, man should Realise the Unity in this diversity and should equabilise and steady his Reason by worshipping that One and Permanent Principle – whether that

worship is of a perceptible object or of an imperceptible object – and should with such desireless, sāttvika, or equable Reason, perform all the activities which befall him according to his status in life, as mere duties and nothing more. As I have exhaustively dealt with this jñāna-vijñāna in the former chapters of this book, that is, of this Gītā-Rahasya, I have not given a more exhaustive summary of the eleven chapters – from the seventh to the seventeenth chapters – in this chapter. As my present object is only to consider the continuity between the various chapters of the Gītā, I have given here only that portion which is necessary for that purpose.

In as much as the Reason is considered superior to the Action in the Karma-Yoga, the Blessed Lord has started by explaining to Arjuna what is meant by Jñāna-Vijñāna, that is, the Realisation of the unity of the Ātman in all created beings, or the all-pervasiveness of the Parameśvara, which (Realisation) is necessary for making the Reason pure and Equable; and He has so far explained how this Knowledge is impressed on the heart as a result of the worship of the Perceptible or the Imperceptible, according to one's intellectual capacity; and how the Reason acquires stability and equability, and Release is thereby reached without abandoning Action. This subject-matter has been considered in the light of the Perishable and the Imperishable and of the Body and the Ātman. Nevertheless, the Blessed Lord has said that after the Reason

has become equable in this way, it is better to perform Action, while life lasts, for the benefit of the world, and giving up the Hope of Fruit (phalāśā), rather than abandoning Action (Gī. 5.2). Therefore, the stage of Asceticism described in the Smṛti texts finds no place in the Karma-Yoga; and as Arjuna felt a doubt that there was likely to be a conflict between this Karma-Yoga and the Manu Smṛti and other Smṛti texts, he has, in the Commencement of the EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER, asked the

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Blessed Lord for an explanation of the difference between Tyāga (Abandonment) and Saṁnyāsa (Renunciation). To this the Blessed Lord has replied that as the etymological meaning of the word 'Saṁnyāsa' is 'to leave' and as the Hope of Fruit is left in the Karma-Yoga, though Karma is not left, Karma-Yoga is essentially a 'Saṁnyāsa'; because, although one does not take up the robes of a mendicant and go about begging in the Karma-Yoga, yet, the essence of Saṁnyāsa (Renunciation) or Vairagya (indifference to the world), according to the Smṛtis, is making the mind desireless; and that essence is to be found in the Path of Karma-Yoga. Here, however, another doubt arises, namely: when the Hope of Fruit has been abandoned, the hope of acquiring heaven also does not remain; and therefore, there does not remain any more the necessity of performing the sacrificial ritual etc., which has been enjoined by the Śrūti.

Therefore, the Blessed Lord has definitely advised that in as much as these Actions have the effect of purifying the Mind, one must perform them along with other Actions, though with a desireless frame of mind, and so keep going the cycle of sacrificial ritual for universal benefit. When- in this way all the questions of Arjuna had been answered, the Blessed Lord has dealt with the sāt̥tvika, rājasa and tāmasa divisions into which all of the following things, namely, Knowledge, Action, Doer, Reason, Steadiness, and Happiness- fall according to the different constituents of Matter, and He has in this way finished the subject-matter of the diversity of these constituents. Then, after having explained that out of these, the desireless Action, the desireless Doer, the unattached Reason (anāsakta-buddhi), the happiness arising out of Non-Attachment and the Realisation of the Unity of the Ātman, arising out of the Realisation of the principle of "avibhaktaṁ vibhakteṣu." (i.e., " the unity in the diversity "—Translator.) are sāt̥tvika, and most excellent, the Blessed Lord has justified the arrangement of the four castes on the basis of the same principle, and said that man becomes Accomplished (kṛtakṛtya) in this world, and acquires Peace and Release only by continually performing as duties and desirelessly, all the various Actions, which befall him according to the arrangement of the four castes; and He has further explained to Arjuna that as

is an inherent quality of Matter (prakṛti), and one cannot escape it, even if one wants to abandon it, lie should surrender himself to the Parameśvara believing that He is the doer as also the one Who causes things to be done, and perform all Actions desirelessly; that the Blessed Lord is that Parameśvara; and that Arjuna should put faith in Him and worship Him, and He would redeem him from all sins. And having in this way, definitely prescribed the Path of Devotion, the Blessed Lord brings to a close the Activistic (pravṛttipara) religion mentioned in the Gītā. In short, the advice in the Gītā starts with the consideration of the two paths of Sāṃkhya and Karma-Yoga, which had been brought into vogue by learned people after deeply meditating on worldly life and the life after death; and the Path of Karma-Yoga which has been declared to be the superior one of the two, has also been finally advocated in the eighteenth chapter, that is, at the end of the Gītā, after having described in the sixth chapter, the Pātañjala-Yoga necessary for making it (Karma-Yoga) successful, and described in the subsequent eleven chapters the means (vidhi), by which Release is ultimately obtained as a result of the Acquisition of the Knowledge of the Parameśvara while following it, by giving an exhaustive description of the Knowledge relating to the Body (piṇḍa) and the Cosmos (brahmāṇḍa). And it was only when Arjuna had heard this justification made by the Blessed Lord, of the excellence of this Yoga or 'Device' of performing all Actions, for universal benefit, according to one's own status in

life, looking upon them as duties merely, and with the idea of dedicating them to the Parameśvara, without in any way thereby prejudicing the benefit of the Ātman in the shape of Release, that he gave up the idea of renouncing the world and becoming a mendicant; and by his own free will – that is, not because the Blessed Lord had said so, but because he had fully understood the science of the Doable and the Not-Doable – prepared himself for the fight. The Gītā was commenced to be preached for the purpose of inducing Arjuna to fight, and the Gītā also ends in the same way (Gī. 18.73).

From the continuity of the eighteen chapters of the Gītā which has been mentioned above, it will be seen that the Gītā

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is not a pot-pourri of three independent Niṣṭhās of Action, Devotion, and Spiritual Knowledge, nor a blanket made up by sewing together pieces of linen, silk, and embroidery; but that this very fine and costly texture in the shape of the Gītā, which bears the name of 'Karma-Yoga', has been woven from beginning to end with "a mind, which was fully engrossed in Yoga", after the threads of cotton, silk and embroidery had been properly placed in their respective places. It is true that this method of exposition is somewhat looser than a strictly scientific method, because it is catechismal; but when one



realises that by such a conversational exposition, the barrenness of a scientific exposition has been obviated, and that the Gītā has become replete with easiness and affectionateness, no one will be ever so little sorry, that the insipid block system of 'reason' and 'conclusion' followed in a scientific exposition, which appeals only to the intelligence, has been avoided. It will likewise be evident from the above disquisition, that though the system of exposition followed in the Gītā is conversational, that is, Paurāṇic, yet, there is no difficulty on that account in the way of applying to it all the critical tests of the Mīmāṃsā school, and thereby drawing the conclusion of. the Gītā. If one considers the COMMENCEMENT of the Gītā, it will be seen that the Gītā has been enunciated with the idea of preaching the Activistic Path of Karma-Yoga, with the help of the Vedānta-Śāstra, to Arjuna, who had come out to fight according to the religion of a warrior, after he had got involved in the discrimination between the Moral and the Immoral; and it has been shown by me already in the first chapter, that the CONCLUSION (upasāmhāra) and the result (phala) of the Gītā is also to the same effect, that is to say, Activistic. I have shown that the advice given in the Gītā to Arjuna. contains at least a dozen times in so many words, and indirectly innumerable times, the injunction "Fight," that is, "perform Action" (this is, abhyāśa); and as there is no work in. Sanskrit literature other than the Gītā which preaches Karma-Yoga (this is, apūrvatā), the fact that the Gītā supports the Karma-Yoga is all the more firmly established by the two Mīmāṃsā tests of ABHYĀŚA and

APŪRVATĀ. Out of the various tests prescribed by the Mīmāṃsā school for determining

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the conclusion of a book, only two remain to be considered with reference to the Gītā, namely, ARTHAVĀDA and UPAPATTI. With reference to them, it has become quite clear from the individual consideration of these questions in the various previous chapters, as also from the reference to the arrangement of the chapters of the Gītā made in this chapter, that 'Karma-Yoga' is the only subject which has been dealt with in the Gītā. Therefore, even if all the tests laid down by the Mīmāṃsā school for determining the import of a book are applied to the Gītā, it becomes clear beyond all doubt, that Karma-Yoga based on Spiritual Knowledge, in which the highest place is given to Devotion, is the subject-matter dealt with in the Gītā. There is also no doubt that all other imports which have been ascribed to the Gītā are merely doctrine supporting; but although these alleged imports are doctrine-supporting, yet, unless I explain how it was possible to place these doctrine-supporting interpretations on the Gītā – and especially the one in support of Saṁnyāsa (Renunciation) – the discussion of these doctrine-supporting interpretations is not exhausted. I will, therefore, briefly consider how it was possible for these doctrine-supporting commentators to

interpret the Gītā as being in support of Saṁnyāsa, and finish this chapter.

Our philosophers have laid down the doctrine that as man is a rational animal, his principal duty or goal (puruṣārtha) is to discern the essential principle underlying the Body and the Cosmos; and this is what is known as "Release" in religion. Nevertheless, having regard to the usual activities of the visible world, it has been laid down by our Śāstras, that this goal of mankind is four-fold, that is, it consists of duty (dharma), wealth (artha), desire (kāma), and Release (mokṣa). As has been mentioned before, the word 'dharma' (duty) is to be understood here as meaning worldly, social, and moral duty. When the goal of mankind has in this way been considered to be four-fold, the question whether these four parts of it are or are not mutually promotive, naturally arises. Although there may be a verbal difference about the doctrine that there is no Release unless a man has acquired the KNOWLEDGE of that Principle which pervades both the

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Body and the Cosmos, by whatever means such Knowledge has been acquired, yet, such difference of opinion is not fundamental. At any rate, this doctrine has been adopted into the Gītā religion. The Gītā also fully accepts the doctrine that if

one wishes to acquire the two parts, namely, 'wealth' and 'desire', of that goal, that has to be done according to moral principles. The only thing, therefore, which remains, is to decide the mutual relationship between dharma (that is, the worldly duties pertaining to the four castes), and Release. All shades of opinion accept the position that there can be no Release unless the Mind (citta) has been first purified by means of dharma. A considerable amount of time is taken up in this purification of the Mind (citta). Therefore, even considering the matter from the point of view of Release, it follows that worldly life has got to be gone through consistently with 'dharma' in the period of time before the purification of the Mind (Manu. 6.35 – 37). 'Saṁnyāsa' means 'giving up', and if a man has not successfully led his worldly life with the help of 'dharma', what has he to give up? or, in other words, how can that 'hapless fellow' (karaṇṭhā) who cannot properly attend to his worldly life (prapañca), properly attend to the highest benefit (paramārtha)?, (Dāsa. 12.1.1 – 10 and 12.8.21 – 31). Because, whether the object relates to this worldly life or to the highest benefit, hard labour, firmness of mind, fortitude, and other similar qualities are required for achieving it; and it is quite clear that a man who does not possess these qualities will not be able to achieve any goal whatsoever. But though some persons accept this position, yet, they say that when a man has acquired the Knowledge of the Ātman by continued effort and by control of the mind, he begins to look upon all worldly activities in the shape of the

enjoyment of the objects of pleasure as insipid; and, just as a serpent casts off the skin which has become useless to it, so also does the Jñānin give up all worldly objects of pleasure, and become steeped in the contemplation of the form of the Parameśvara (Br. 4.4.7). As this path of leading one's life gives the highest importance to Spiritual Knowledge (jñāna) after the abandonment of worldly affairs, it is called the Path of Knowledge or the Sāṃkhya Path; or,

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because it consists of the abandonment of all worldly affairs, it is called the Path of Renunciation (saṁnyāsa). But the Gītā religion says to the contrary, that not only is dharma necessary for the purification of the Mind, but it is necessary to continue doing the same Actions, merely as duties, and as part of one's religion, and desirelessly, and for the good of others, even afterwards, that is, after the purification of the Mind, although worldly activities in the shape of enjoyment of objects of pleasure may become unnecessary for one's own benefit. If a Jñānin does not do so, there will remain nobody who can serve as an example for others, and the world will come to an end. No one can escape Action in this world of Action, and if the Mind (buddhi) has become desireless, no action which is performed obstructs Release. Therefore, it is the duty also of Jñānins, not to give up worldly life, but to continue worldly activities, so long as life lasts, with an apathetic frame of mind.

This path of leading one's life which has been preached in the Gītā, is known as the Path of Karma (Karma-niṣṭhā) or Karma-Yoga. But although the Karma-Yoga has in this way been proved to be the most excellent way of leading one's life in the Gītā, it has nowhere vilified the Path of Renunciation, but has on the other hand stated that it is productive of Release. And it is quite clear, that the Blessed Lord could not condemn as unacceptable that path which was followed in the commencement of the world by Sanatkumāra and others, and later on by Śuka, Yājñavalkya and others. Considering worldly affairs as sweet or as insipid, depends to a certain extent on a man's inherent nature, resulting from the previous prārabdha (commenced) Karma; and it has been stated before that in spite of a man's having acquired Knowledge, he cannot escape suffering for that Karma which is prārabdha. Therefore, if a Jñānin is filled with a sincere disgust for worldly life and renounces the world, as a result of such an inherent nature, which results from his prārabdha karma, there is no sense in finding fault with him. The perfect man (siddha) whose Reason has become unattached (niḥsaṅga) and pure, as a result of the Realisation of the Ātman, at least places before the eyes of people, in his own form, an example of the highest purity of human intelligence,

and of the immensity of human strength involved in keeping under control the most uncontrollable mental emotions which are naturally entranced by objects of pleasure, if he does nothing else; and such a performance is no mean performance from the point of view of universal welfare (lokasaṃgraha).

This accounts for the respect in the public mind for the Path of Renunciation; and that reason has also been accepted by the Gītā from the point of view of Release. But when one does not merely consider 'inherent nature' or 'prārabdha karma', but considers scientifically how a Jñānin, who has acquired complete Freedom of the Ātman, should thereafter lead his life in the world of Action, the Path of the Abandonment of Action is seen to be inferior in merit; and one has to draw the conclusion drawn by the Gītā, that the Path of Karma-Yoga followed in the commencement of the world by Marīci and others and later on by Janaka and others, must be followed by Jñānins in the world, for universal welfare. Because, it now logically follows that Jñānins must perform the work of keeping going the universe which has been created by the Parameśvara; and as in this Path of Karma-Yoga, the power of Jñāna is added to the power of Karma without any conflict, it is seen to be superior to the pure Sāṃkhya Path.

When one considers what the main difference between the two paths of Sāṃkhya and Karma-Yoga is, we arrive at the equation  $SĀṂKHYA + NIṢKĀMA-KARMA = KARMA-YOGA$ ; and, as has been stated by Vaiśaṃpāyana, consideration of the

Sāṃkhya-Niṣṭhā is easily included in the consideration of the Activistic Karma-Yoga advocated by the Gītā (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 348.53); and that is how the commentators on the Gītā who support the Path of Renunciation have found it easy to claim that the Gītā advocates the Sāṃkhya or the Saṃnyāsa. Path. If one neglects those stanzas in the Gītā which prove that Action is meritorious and which preach Action; or, if one passes a remark on one's own responsibility that they are merely an 'arthavāda', that is, incidentally laudatory; or, if by some other device the factor of niṣkāma-karma (Desireless- Action) is subtracted from the abovementioned equation, the same equation is converted into Sāṃkhya = Karma-Yoga; and it becomes easy to say that the Gītā supports the Sāṃkhya

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Path. But, such interpretations are totally inconsistent with the beginning (upakrama) and the conclusion (upasaṃhāra) of the Gītā; and saying that Karma-Yoga is inferior and that Sāṃkhya is the chief subject-matter of exposition in the Gītā is, as I have clearly shown in many places in this book, as unreasonable as calling the owner of a house a guest and calling the guest the owner; and, in the course of my exposition, I have also refuted the theories that only Vedānta, or only Devotion, or only Pātañjala-Yoga, has been advocated by the Gītā. What is there which cannot be found in the Gītā? The Gītā has adopted something or other from the various important paths



prescribed in the Vedic religion for obtaining Release; and even then, the true mystic import of the Gītā is something which is quite different from all the paths according to the rule "bhūtabhṛṇa na ca bhūtastho" (Gī. 9.5), (that is, "supports all created things, and yet is not in them" ~Translator.). The doctrine that there is no Release if there is no Knowledge, which pertains to the Path of Renunciation, that is, to the Upaniṣads, is acceptable to the Gītā; but, as that proposition has been tacked on to the proposition of Desireless Action, the Bhāgavata doctrine in the Gītā easily includes the Path of Asceticism. Nevertheless, instead of interpreting the words – 'saṁnyāsa' or 'vairagya' as meaning the Abandonment of Action, the Gītā says that true vairagya (Abandonment) or true saṁnyāsa (Renunciation) lies in the Abandonment of the Hope of Fruit, and lays down the ultimate doctrine that the Desireless Karma-Yoga is better than the Karma-Saṁnyāsa of the Upaniṣads. The Gītā also accepts the doctrine of the orthodox Mīmāṃsā school that if sacrificial ritual is observed merely for the purpose of the sacrifice, it does not create bondage. But, if the word 'Yajña' (sacrifice) is taken in a comprehensive meaning, all Actions performed after abandoning the Hope of Fruit are a great 'Yajña' in themselves; and the Gītā has, by taking that comprehensive meaning, amplified that doctrine by saying that performing all Actions according to the duties enjoined on the four castes, continually, and desirelessly, is the highest duty of mankind.

The Gītā has considered the Sāṃkhya theory regarding the creation of the world as superior to the Upaniṣad theory;

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nevertheless, the Gītā has not stopped with Matter (prakṛti) and Spirit (puruṣa) according to Sāṃkhya philosophy, but has taken the chain of the creation of the universe right to the eternal Paramātmā of the Upaniṣads. The Gītā, has also described the doctrine (vidhi) of the Nārāyaṇīya or Bhāgavata religion consisting of the worship of Vāsudeva, namely, that the Knowledge of the Absolute Self should be acquired by Faith and Devotion, as it is more difficult to acquire it by Intelligence. But, even in this matter the Gītā does not merely copy the Bhāgavata religion; and, discarding the theory of the Bhāgavata religion regarding the birth of the Personal Self (Jīva) from Vasudeva, as has been done in the Vedānta-Sūtras, it has completely harmonised the doctrines of the Bhāgavata religion relating to Devotion with the doctrines of the Upaniṣads relating to the Body and the Ātman. The only remaining Path of Release is the Pātāñjala-Yoga. But, although the Gītā, does not say that the Pātāñjala-Yoga is the principal duty of man, yet, since the control of the organs is necessary for making the Reason equable, the Gītā to that extent recommends the practices of yama, (religious observance) niyama (restraint of the Mind), āsana (bodily postures), etc., mentioned in the Pātāñjala-Yoga. In short, all the various

means mentioned in the Vedic religion for obtaining Release have been to some extent or other referred to and prescribed in the Gītā, as occasion arose, in considering the Karma-Yoga in all its bearings. If all these injunctions are considered independent of each other, there arise inconsistencies; and it appears that the various doctrines mentioned in the Gītā, are mutually contradictory; and this impression is fortified by the doctrine-supporting commentaries of various commentators; but, when one lays down the proposition, as has been done by me, that the principal object of the Gītā is to harmonise Spiritual Knowledge with Devotion, and to support the Karma-Yoga on that basis, all these apparent inconsistencies disappear; and one cannot but admire the super-human wisdom of the Gītā in bringing about a fusion between Spiritual Knowledge, Devotion, and Karma-Yoga in a most comprehensive way. Just as the form of the Ganges does not change whatever the number of rivers which come and join it, so also

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is the case with the Gītā. Whatever it may contain, the Karma-Yoga ultimately remains the principal subject-matter of the Gītā. But, though the Karma-Yoga is thus the principal subject of the Gītā, yet, as the essence of the philosophy of Release has been beautifully described in it, side by side with the Philosophy of Action, the Blessed Lord has said to Arjuna, in

the beginning of the Anugītā, that this Gītā religion, which was propounded to enable him to properly discriminate between the Doable and the Not-Doable is fully competent to place the Brahman within one's reach – "sa hi dharmāḥ suparyāpto brahmaṇaḥ padavedane" (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 16.12); and that those who follow this path do not need any other arduous worship for attaining Release. I fully realise that this statement will not be appreciated by people who advocate the Path of Renunciation and who maintain that Release is impossible unless all Action is abandoned; but there is no help for that. Not only does the Gītā not support the Path of Saṁnyāsa or any other path of renunciation, but, I will go further and say that the Gītā has been preached in order to satisfactorily explain, from the point of view of the Knowledge of the Brahman, why Action should not be abandoned even after the Acquisition of Knowledge. Therefore, the followers of the Path of Renunciation must remain satisfied with the numerous Vedic treatises which support the Path of Saṁnyāsa, instead of attempting to foist Saṁnyāsa on the Gītā. Or, just as the Blessed Lord has without pride referred to the Path of Renunciation in the Gītā as leading to Release, so also and with the same equable frame of mind, should the followers of Sāṁkhya philosophy say: "as the Parameśvara intends the world to go on, and as He from time to time takes incarnations for that purpose, the Path of carrying on the activities of worldly life, with a desireless frame of mind, even after the Acquisition of Knowledge, which has been preached by the

Blessed Lord in the Gītā, is the most proper path to be followed in the Kali-yuga".

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# CHAPTER XV.

## CONCLUSION.

### (UPASAMHĀRA)

tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu mām anusmara yudhya ca । [1]

~ Gītā (8.7).

Whether one considers the continuity of the various chapters of the Gītā, or analyses all the various subject-matters dealt with in it according to the logical method of the Mīmāṃsā school, it follows clearly that (i) the various interpretations, which have been put on the Gītā by doctrine-supporting commentators, who have looked upon the Karma-Yoga as inferior, are not correct; and that (ii) harmonising the Monistic (advaita) Vedānta of the Upaniṣads with the Philosophy of Devotion, and in that way accounting for the mode of life of great and noble people, or, to mention the matter briefly, Karma-Yoga fused with Spiritual Knowledge and Devotion, is

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[1] "Therefore, at all times, remember me and fight." The word 'fight' has been used having regard to the occasion; but it does not mean only 'fight', but must be taken to mean 'perform all Actions pertaining to your status in life'.

the true purpose of the Gītā. Although performing the ritual prescribed in the Śrutis and the Smṛtis throughout life, as directed by the Mīmāṃsā, may be following the injunctions of the Śāstras, yet, this mechanical ritual, which is devoid of Spiritual Knowledge, can never satisfy an intelligent person; and if one considers the philosophy of the Upaniṣads, not only is it difficult to grasp for people of ordinary intelligence, as it is based purely on Reason, but the Saṁnyāsa or Renunciation, advocated by it, conflicts with universal benefit (lokasaṁgraha). Therefore, the Blessed Lord has preached in the Gītā the philosophy of life-long Desireless Action, based on Spiritual Knowledge, and in which the highest importance is given to Devotion, so as to effect a fusion between Intelligence (Jñāna), Love (Devotion), and physical capacity (kartṛtva), and so as to enable the ordinary affairs of the world to be carried on satisfactorily, without prejudicing Release; and it follows from the Commencement (upakrama) and the Conclusion (upasaṁhāra) of the Gītā, that this

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advice covers the entire sum and substance of the philosophy of the Doable and the Not-Doable, and that the disquisition on the Doable and the Not-Doable was the true reason for preaching this religion to Arjuna. Which Action is righteous, meritorious, just, or beneficial, and which, on the other hand, is unrighteous, improper, unjust or harmful, can be explained

in two ways. The one way is not to explain the inherent reason or the justification for the advice, but merely to say that if a particular thing is done in a particular way, it is right, and if done in another particular way, it is wrong. Injunctions like 'Do not cause death', 'Do not steal', 'Speak the truth' (satyaṁ vada), Act righteously (dharmāṁ cara) etc. are of this kind. These injunctions or courses of conduct are definitely laid down in the Manu-Smṛti, and other Smṛtis, and in the Upaniṣads. But as man is a rational animal, he is not satisfied with such didactic injunctions, and he naturally feels a desire to understand the true reason why they were laid down; and he naturally thinks over and finds out the eternal and fundamental principle at the bottom of these rules of conduct. Going to the bottom of worldly morality in this way, and finding out the underlying fundamental principles, is the purpose of PHILOSOPHY (Śāstra); and merely putting together and mentioning the rules, is known as ĀCĀRA-SAMGRAHA. The code of rules of conduct (ācāra-saṁgraha) relating to the Path of Action is to be found in the Smṛti texts; and the Bhagavadgītā contains a conversational or Paurāṇika, but philosophical (śāstrīya) disquisition on the fundamental principles of that code. Therefore, it is more proper to say that the subject-matter of exposition in the Gītā is THE SCIENCE OF KARMA-YOGA (Karma-Yoga-Śāstra), instead of saying that it is KARMA-YOGA; and this word, that is, SCIENCE OF YOGA (Yoga-Śāstra) has been used in the Gītā in the concluding portion of every chapter showing the end of the chapter. This Science of



Karma-Yoga in the Gītā has been called the Science of Proper Conduct (sadvartana), the Science of Good Behaviour (sadācāra), Philosophy of Ethics, Critique of Ethics, Elements of Ethics, the Science of Duty, the Discernment of Right and Wrong, or the Science of Sociology, by Western philosophers, who either do not believe

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in the life after death, or consider it as inferior. These are merely Materialistic names; and their way of criticising is also a purely Materialistic way. Therefore, the majority of the persons who have read the books of such Western writers think that Morality or Ethics has not been dealt with in any work in Sanskrit literature. The most profound philosophy in India is the Vedānta philosophy; and if one considers our modern Vedānta works, they are seen to be principally indifferent about worldly affairs. Then, how can we find in them any consideration of Karma-Yoga or of Ethics? This subject-matter cannot be dealt with in books on Grammar, or on Logic; and in the Smṛti texts, one cannot find anything more- than a code of religious precepts. Therefore, it is the common belief of many persons, that our ancient writers, being steeped- in the deep contemplation of Release, have forgotten to deal) with the subject-matter of Morality or Ethics. This misunderstanding will be removed if one carefully considers the Mahābhārata or the Gītā. But, as the

Mahābhārata is a very extensive work, it is very difficult to read the whole of it and to give careful thought to the subject-matter in it; and: although the Gītā is small, yet, there is a strong belief, that it deals only with the question of Release, on account of the doctrine-supporting commentaries on it. But no one has taken the trouble to think that the Path of Saṁnyāsa and the Path of Karma-Yoga were both in vogue in India from Vedic times; that the numbers following the Path of Karma-Yoga were a thousand times greater than of those following the Path of Saṁnyāsa; and that the great and noble persons, whose lives have been described in the Purāṇas, were supporters of Karma-Yoga. Then, was not even one of these persons' inclined to vindicate the Path of Karma-Yoga followed by him? If it is said that there are no works on Karma-Yoga, because all Spiritual Knowledge is confined to the Brahmin caste, and the Vedāntist Brahmins are apathetic towards Action, that statement too would be incorrect. Because, in the times of the Upaniṣads, and also afterwards, there were Jñānins like Janaka and Śrī Kṛṣṇa among the Kṣatriyas; and even learned Brahmins like Vyāsa, have written the biographies of great Kṣatriyas. In writing these biographies, would,

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it not be necessary to explain the key-note of the character and lives of those men? This key-note was Karma-Yoga or the

philosophy of worldly life; and in order to explain this principle, subtle points of righteous or unrighteous conduct have been dealt with in several places in the Mahābhārata, and ultimately the Gītā has dealt with those principles of Ethics, which have been responsible for the maintenance of the world, consistently with the view-point of Release. There are also many such instances in the other Purāṇas. But, as all other expositions on the subject turn pale by the side of the brilliance of the Gītā, the Bhagavadgītā has become the most important work on the philosophy of Karma-Yoga. I have dealt with the true nature of this Karma-Yoga in the foregoing chapters. Yet, it cannot be said that this exposition of the doctrine of the Gītā is complete, unless one compares the ethical principles propounded by Western philosophers with the fundamental spiritual principles of the Doable and the Not-Doable enunciated in the Gītā. In making this comparison, it is also necessary to compare the Philosophy of the Absolute Self in the East with such philosophy in the West. But the knowledge of the Absolute Self in the West has not gone much beyond our knowledge. As this fact is commonly accepted, there is not much of a necessity to compare the- Eastern metaphysical philosophy «with the Western metaphysical philosophy; [1] and the only thing which remains is the

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[1] A comparison of our Vedānta with Western Philosophy has been made by Prof. Deussen in his book called the Elements: of Metaphysics; and at the end of the second edition of this book, there is printed the lecture delivered by Prof. Deussen before the Royal Asiatic Society at Bombay, when he had come to India in 1893, on the subject: "On the

comparison of the Eastern with the Western science of Ethics or Karma-Yoga, which science according to many has not been expounded by our philosophers. But, the consideration of even this one subject is so comprehensive, that it will be necessary to write an independent treatise in order to deal with it exhaustively. Yet, as I did not consider it proper

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to omit this matter altogether from this book on that account, I have touched upon only the most salient and important points in that subject in this concluding chapter.

As the words 'Righteousness' and 'Unrighteousness', or 'Morality' and 'Immorality', can, strictly speaking, be applied only to the Actions of intelligent beings, it can be realised, after even a little consideration, that Morality does not rest only on Action, but rests on Reason. This is what is meant by saying: "dharmo hi teṣāṃ adhiko viśeṣaḥ", i.e., "knowledge of Right and Wrong is the specific quality of man, that is, of intelligent beings". It is true that we refer to a bullock or to a river, as mischievous or terrible respectively, having regard to the effect their action or activity has on us; but if a bullock

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Philosophy of Vedānta". Besides this, the work, The Religion and Philosophy of the Upaniṣads, written on this subject by Prof. Deussen also deserves to be read.

gives us a push, no one files a suit against him; and if a river gets flooded and crops are washed away, and thereby "great wrong to a great many persons" is caused, no one on that account calls the river bad, or refers to it as a marauder. In answer to this position, many object: once it is admitted that the rules of Right and "Wrong apply only to the affairs of men, what is the objection to considering the rightness or wrongness of the Action of men, merely from the point of view of the Action? But even this question is not difficult to answer. Because, even if one leaves aside lifeless objects or animals born in the unenlightened species of birds or beasts, and considers only the actions of human beings, yet, in as much as the wrongs committed by men in a moment of insanity or unknowingly, are considered forgivable by people, or even according to law, one has necessarily to consider, in the first instance, the Reason of the doer, that is to say, the motive with which he did the act, and whether or not he had realised the consequences of the act, when one is determining the righteousness or the unrighteousness of the doer. It is not difficult for a rich man to give large sums of money in charity as he wishes. But although this his act may be 'good', yet, when one has to decide the true moral value of it, such value cannot be determined merely by considering the fact of this gift made in an off-hand way. One has to consider whether or not the Reason of that rich person was

governed by religious faith (śraddhā); and, though, there may be no other evidence except this off-hand charitable gift for coming to a decision on that point, yet, the fact remains that no one looks upon this gift as of the same moral value as another gift made by a person with religious faith; at any rate there is room for doubt. At the end of the Mahābhārata, after the entire question of righteousness and unrighteousness has been dealt with, there is a story which very well brings out this position. In the Aśvamedha sacrifice (yajña) made by Yudhiṣṭhira, when he ascended the throne, millions of people were satisfied, and began to sing his praises for the munificent gifts of food and other objects made by him. Then a lustrous mongoose (nakula) came there and said to them: "All your praises are useless. However great the Yajña made by Yudhiṣṭhira may be, it cannot be equal in merit to that sacrifice which was made for a guest in former days, in this very Kurukṣetra, by a poor Brahmin, who lived by uñchavṛtti, that is, by gleaning grain left in the fields, and who gave all the sattva food, which was spread out before himself and his wife and children, to a hungry mendicant, who suddenly came to beg for alms, just when they were about to start to eat, notwithstanding that he and they had been without food for many days". (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 90) The mouth and half the body of this mongoose was of gold; and the reason given by him for saying that the merit of the Yajña performed by Yudhiṣṭhira was less than the merit acquired by the poor Brahmin, who

had given one seer of sattva grain to a mendicant was as follows: "I rolled about in the remnants of food left over in the house of that Brahmin after the mendicant had partaken of it, and on that account my mouth and half of my body has become golden; but although I rolled about in the remnants of food left over after eating in the pandal erected by Yudhiṣṭhira for the Yajña, the rest of my body has not become golden". In this case, if one sees only what leads to 'the greatest good of the greatest number', by taking into account only the external effects of the Action, one will have to come to the conclusion, that the merit of satisfying one hundred thousand mendicants is a hundred thousand times more than the merit of satisfying one beggar.

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But, will this conclusion be correct, not from the point of view of religion merely, but even of morality? Acquiring a large amount of wealth, or getting an opportunity of performing big acts for the benefit of others, does not depend merely on anybody's virtuous conduct; and if one has to consider the small act performed by the poor Brahmin according to his means as of little ethical or religious merit, because it was not possible for him to perform a large Yajña for want of money, one will have to come to the conclusion that the poor need never entertain the hope of becoming religious or moral like the rich. According to the principle of Freedom of Will, keeping

his mind pure was a matter within the control of the poor Brahmin; and if there is no doubt that his charitable instinct was as pure as that of Yudhiṣṭhira, then, notwithstanding the smallness of the act performed by him, the ethical merit of this Brahmin and of the small act performed by him, must be considered to be the same as that of Yudhiṣṭhira and of the magnificent Yajña performed by him. Nay; from the fact that he made a self-sacrifice by making a gift of food in order to save the life of a mendicant, notwithstanding that he himself was poor and without food for many days, it follows that his Reason was purer than that of Yudhiṣṭhira; because, it is a universally accepted fact that purity of mind, like courage and other qualities, is truly proved only in times of adversity; and even Kant has, in the beginning of his book on Ethics, expressed an opinion that that man whose moral rectitude does not flinch even in times of adversity is the truly moral man. The same thing is conveyed by what was said by the mongoose. But the purity of the heart of Yudhiṣṭhira had been tested not only by the Yajña performed by him after he had ascended the throne, that is, in times of prosperity, but also before that, that is, on many trying occasions, in adverse circumstances, just as in the case of the Brahmin; and as the proposition of the writer of the Mahābhārata was, that Yudhiṣṭhira was morally great, even according to the subtle law relating to righteous and unrighteous conduct laid down above, he has called the mongoose a 'reviler'. Still, from the



statement in the Mahābhārata that that Brahmin attained the same final state which

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is reached by people who perform the Aśvamedha Yajña, it follows that though the merit of the act of the Brahmin might not, in the opinion of the writer of the Mahābhārata, have been greater than that of the Yajña of Yudhiṣṭhira, yet, he certainly looked upon the ethical or religious merit of both as at least the same. Even in ordinary life, we follow the same principle, and consider the moral merit of a millionaire giving a thousand rupees for a pious object, as the same as that of a poor man who gives one rupee by way of subscription. It is likely that this illustration might be considered by some as new, on account of the use of the word 'subscription'; I, therefore, say that in the exposition of Morality and Immorality made in the Mahābhārata, while the story of the mongoose was being told, it is said:—

sahasraśaktiś ca śataṁ śataśaktir daśāpi ca ।

dadyād apaś ca yaḥ śaktyā sarve tulyaphalāḥ smṛtāḥ ॥

(Ma. Bhā. Aśva.90.97),

that is, "a man who owns a thousand giving a hundred, a man who owns a hundred giving ten, or someone according to his ability giving only a drink of water, all these (acts) are of the

same merit, and equally beneficial"; and the same is the purport conveyed by the sentence "patraṃ puṣpaṃ phalaṃ toyaṃ etc." (Gī. 9.26), (i.e., "a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or even water" ~Translator.), in the Gītā. This principle has been adopted not only in our religion but also in the Christian religion. The Lord Christ has said in one place that: "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke. 12.48); and there is a statement in another place in the Bible, that one day, when the Lord Christ had gone to church and the work of collecting funds for charitable purposes was going on, He said:— "Verily I say unto to you, that this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they, which have cast into the treasury" (Mark. 12.43 and 44), on seeing an extremely poor widow giving both the pice which she had, in charity. This clearly proves that even the Lord Christ had accepted the position that the merit of an act has to be determined by reference to the Reason of the doer; and that when the Reason of the doer is pure, even a small act is very

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often of the same ethical merit as a larger act. If one considers the effect of the impurity of the Reason on the moral merit of an Action, in the opposite case, that is, when the Reason is not pure, it will be seen that killing in self-defence a man who has attacked you for murdering you, and killing a rich traveller for the sake of his money, are ethically entirely different, though

the act of killing is the same in both the cases. The German poet Schiller has described a similar incident towards the end of his drama William Tell; and the distinction which has been made by him there between two externally exact actions, on account of the purity or the impurity of the Reason, is the difference between the 'abandonment of self-interest' (svārtha-tyāga) and the 'destruction of self-interest' (svārtha-hatyā). This shows that whether the two acts are unequal or are equal to each other, the difference between them, from the point of view of Morality, arises from the difference between the motives of the doers. This 'motive' is also known, as 'Intention', 'Desire', or 'Reason'; because, although the scientific meaning of the word 'Reason' is the 'Discerning, organ', yet, as 'Knowledge', 'Desire', and 'Intention' are all the results of the activity of this mental organ, it is usual to also refer to all these as 'Reason'; and as has been stated before, the Equable Reason of the Sthitaprajña is a combination of the steadiness of Pure Reason and the purity of Practical Reason. The Blessed Lord did not ask Arjuna to consider how many persons would be benefited or how many persons ruined by the war being carried on. On the other hand, the Blessed Lord has said, "Whether Bhīṣma will die or Droṇa will die as a result of the carrying on of the war, is a minor consideration; the principal question is with what frame of Reason you are going to enter the fight; and if your Reason is like that of a Sthitaprajña, you will incur no sin if Bhīṣma and Droṇa are killed while you are performing your duty with that pure and

untarnished Reason. You are not fighting with a Hope of Fruit in the shape of causing the death of Bhīṣma. You have only asked for a share of that kingdom to which you have acquired a right by birth; in order to avoid the war, you, have not failed to take it lying down as much as possible, and have even tried conciliatory ambassadors; but when you saw

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that this course of propriety and of gentleness was of no avail, you have started the war, as there was no other alternative. For this, you are not to blame at all; because, it is your duty, to acquire these rights ultimately by fight, if necessary, in the interests of public welfare, according to the religion of Kṣatriyas, instead of wasting time in begging like a Brahmin, (Ma. Bhā. U. 28 and 72; and Vanaparva 33.48 and 50)". Accepting this logical reasoning of the Blessed Lord, Vyāsa has satisfied Yudhiṣṭhira later on in the Śāntiparva (Śān. Ch. 32 and 33). But though the Reason is thus considered to be the superior factor in deciding what is right and what is wrong, it becomes necessary to explain what is meant by Pure Reason; because, as both the Mind and the Reason are evolutes (vikāra) of Matter (prakṛti), they can inherently be of three kinds, that is sāttvika (static), rājasa (active) and tāmasa (ignorant). Therefore, the Gītā has said that, that Reasoning Faculty which Realises the Form of the permanent Ātman, which (Ātman) is beyond the cognizance of Reason, which

(form) is common to all created things, is to be called the pure or the sāt̥tvika Reason in the Philosophy of Karma-Yoga. The sāt̥tvika Reason is also known as the Equable Reason; and the word 'Equable' means "which recognises and Realises the unity or identity of the Ātman which inhabits all created things". That Reason which does not Realise this identity, is neither pure, nor sāt̥tvika. When one has thus decided that this Equability of Reason is the most important factor in determining questions of Morality, the next question which naturally arises is, how to recognise this evenness or Equability of Reason; because, as the Reason is an internal organ, one cannot see by one's eyes whether it is good or bad. Therefore, in order to find out whether or not the Reason is pure and equable, one must in the first instance consider the external Actions of the man; otherwise, a man will by his mouth say that his Reason is pure and equable, and by his hands do whatever he likes. Therefore, the Śāstras have laid down the proposition that the true Knower of the Brahman has to be recognised by considering his nature; and that if he is a mere talker, he is not a true saint. In describing the characteristics of the Sthitaprajña or of the Devotee of the Blessed Lord, the Bhagavadgītā principally

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describes how such persons behave in the world towards other people; and in the thirteenth chapter, 'Jñāna'

(Knowledge) has also been defined in the same way, that is, by explaining the effect of Jñāna on a man's nature. From this it will be seen, that the Gītā does not say that one need not at all consider the external Actions of a man. But, although behaviour, that is to say, external Action, and principally external Action in times of adversity, has to be considered in order to test whether the Reason of any particular person – and specially of another person – is or is not Equable, yet, we must also bear in mind, that we cannot come to a faultless conclusion as to the morality of a person merely from his external behaviour. Because, although under certain circumstances, an external Action may be small, yet, its moral value is as high as that of a big act, as will be proved from the story of the mongoose mentioned above. Therefore, our Śāstras have laid down that (i) whether the external act is big or small, and whether it is beneficial to one person or brings happiness to many persons, that cannot be given higher importance than as being an evidence of a pure Reason; that (ii) after deciding to what extent the Reason of the doer is or is not pure, by considering this external Action, one has ultimately to decide the morality or otherwise of such Action, by reference to the purity of Reason to be ascertained in this way; and that (iii) questions of Morality cannot be properly decided merely by considering external Actions. And, that is why the Equable and Pure Reason, that is, Desire, has been given a high place in the Karma-Yoga in the Gītā, by saying that "the Reason is superior to the Action" (2.49). In the book on

the Bhāgavata religion called Nārada Pañcarātra, which is later in date than the Gītā, Mārkaṇḍeya says to Nārada

mānasaṁ prāṇinām eva sarvakarmaikakāraṇam ।  
manonurūpaṁ vākyam ca vākyena prasphuṭam manah  
॥ (Nā. Pañ. 1.7.18).

that is, "the Mind is the only cause (the root cause) of all the Actions of mankind. As the Mind is, so does the man speak; a man's Mind expresses itself in what he says". In

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short, the Mind (that is, the determination of the Mind) comes first, and then all Actions take place. Therefore, Buddhist writers have also accepted the doctrine of the Gītā relating to Pure Reason for distinguishing between the Doable and the Not-doable. For example, in the well-known Buddhistic work on Morality" known as Dhammapada, it is stated right in the beginning that

manopubbaṅgamā dhammā mano seṭṭhā (śreṣṭhā)  
manomayā ।  
manasā ce paduṭṭhena bhāsati vā karoti vā ।  
tato na dukkham anveti cakkam va vahato padaṁ ॥  
(Dhammapada 1).

that is: "the Mind, that is, the activities of the Mind come first, and the righteous or unrighteous Action comes afterwards; (this being the order) the Mind is considered as principal and superior in this matter, and all these tendencies (dhammā) must be said to be based on the Mind; therefore, according as the Mind of the doer is pure or vicious, so does his speech or action become good or bad; and he enjoys happiness, or suffers unhappiness, accordingly later on" [1]. Similarly, Buddhist writers have also accepted the corollary drawn from this doctrine in the Upaniṣads and in the Gītā. (Kauṣṭhī. 3.1; and Gī. 18.17), that the Sthitaprajña, whose mind has once become completely pure and desireless, cannot afterwards be guilty of any sin, and that whatever he does, he is free both from sin and merit; and it is stated in many places in Buddhistic works that the 'arhat' that is, the 'man who has reached the state of perfection', is always pure and sinless (Dhammapada, 294 and 295; Milinda-Pra. 4.5.7).

From what has been stated above the Western Intuitionist school, which worships and takes the decision on questions of

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[1] This stanza, in Pali has been interpreted by different persons in different ways; but in my opinion this stanza is based on the principle, that in order to determine the propriety or impropriety of any particular Action, one has to consider the nature of the Mind of the doer. See the commentary of Max Müller on his English translation of the Dhammapada (S. B. E. "Vol. X. pp. 3, 4).



Morality from the deity of Conscience, and the Western. Materialistic school, which asks you to decide all questions of Morality by the sole external test of the greatest 'good of the greatest number', will both be seen to be one-sided and scientifically insufficient; because, Conscience is not some independent thing or deity, but is included in Pure Reason; and when it has been so included, the decision of Conscience about the Duty and the Non-duty can never be faultless; because, the Conscience of every man is *sāttvika*, *rājasa* or *tāmasa* according to his inherent nature. And if you say that questions of Morality have to be decided by the purely external material test of 'the greatest good of the greatest number', the Reason of the doer is left entirely out of calculation; and if someone has taken in advance skillful precautions for reducing as far as possible the injurious external effects of his theft or of his immoral behaviour, one has to say that his evil doings are less objection- able from the point of view of Materialistic Morality. That is why the Vedic religion is not the only religion which has insisted on the purity of the body, the speech, and the mind (Manu. 12.3 – 8; 9.29); but, even in the Bible, adultery or immoral behaviour is not considered purely a bodily sin; and a man's looking with immoral intentions towards a woman not his wife, or a woman looking with similar intentions towards a man not her husband, have also been considered, adulterous (Matthew.

5.28). And in the Buddhistic religion, it is stated that the purity must be not only bodily but also of the speech, and of the Mind (Dhamma. 96 and 391). Besides, Green says in addition that if one considers only external happiness as the highest ideal, there is a chance of rivalry between men and men or between nations and nations for acquiring it, and of quarrels arising in consequence; because, it is, as a rule, not possible for a person to acquire the external, means of obtaining external happiness without reducing the happiness of others. The same is not the case with the Equable Reason. This internal happiness is self-obtained, that is to say, it can be acquired by any one for himself without interfering with the happiness of another. Not only is this so, but that man, who has acquired the inherent nature of

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behaving with equability towards all created things by realising the unity of the Ātman, cannot either secretly or openly commit any sin; and it does not remain necessary to say to him: "Always consider in what the greatest good of the greatest number lies". Because, in the case of a man, it necessarily follows that whatever he does, will be done by him after proper consideration. It is not that proper consideration is necessary only for determining the correctness of moral Actions. What should be the state of a man's conscience when he makes that proper consideration, is the important question;

because, the conscience of everyone is not the same. Therefore, when one says that Equability of Reason must always inhabit the Conscience, it is not necessary to also say that one should take into proper account the welfare of the greatest number, or of all created beings, or of the entire creation. Western philosophers have now started saying that man has duties not only towards all living beings in the human species, but also towards living beings among dumb animals; and these duties must be included in the philosophy of the Doable and the Not-Doable; and it will be seen that from this comprehensive point of view, the words 'welfare of the entire creation' (sarvabhūta-hita) are more comprehensive than the words "the greatest good of the greatest number of human beings"; and that, all this is included in Equability of Reason. If, on the other hand, one takes the case where the Reason of a particular person is not pure and equable, then, although he may be perfectly capable of deciding by calculation in what 'the greatest good of the greatest number' lies, it is not possible that he will be inclined towards moral Action,, because, being inclined towards any good Action, is the quality of a Pure Mind, and not of a calculating Mind. If someone says that we need not consider the inherent nature or the mental frame of such a calculative person, and that if his calculation is correct, a correct decision is arrived at between the Duty and the Non-Duty, and we get what we want, than, such a position is wrong. Because, although everyone ordinarily understands what is pain and what is happiness, yet, in discriminating

between various kinds of pain and happiness, one has in the first place to decide what value

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has to be assigned to which particular pain or happiness; and, as there does not now exist any definite external instrument like a thermometer for deciding these values, nor is there any likelihood of such an instrument being invented in the future, everyone has to decide the true value of any particular pain or happiness with the help only of his own mind. But, as the man who is not saturated with the feeling of Self-Identification (ātmaupamyā), according to which "another man has the same feelings as I", cannot properly gauge the intensity of pain or happiness, he cannot make a true valuation of this pain or happiness; and then there is a natural mistake in the values of pain and happiness taken by him for arriving at a decision, and there is very often a chance that all his calculations will go wrong. Therefore, one must not ascribe much importance to the calculating process of 'considering' in the phrase 'considering the greatest good of the greatest number'; and one has ultimately to say that the true seed of Morality is that Pure, Self-Identifying and greedless Reason which has become Equable towards all created things, and by which the true value of the pain or happiness of the greatest number of other persons has first to be decided. Morality is the inherent nature of a Conscience which is mineless, pure, loving, equable, or, in

short, which is endowed with the sattva constituent; it is not the result of mere discriminating calculation. Therefore, when Yudhiṣṭhira had ascended the throne after the Bhāratī war, and Kuntī, who had been made happy by the prowess of her sons, was about to leave the kingdom along with Dhṛtarāṣṭra in order to live in the woods, she did not expatiate on the advice of doing 'the greatest good to the greatest number', but simply said "manas te mahad astu ca"(Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 17.21), i.e., " O, my son, may your Mind be always great". Those Western philosophers, who have maintained that considering in what the greatest good of the greatest number lies, is the true, scientific, and easiest test of Morality, have, in the first place, taken for granted that everyone has the same pure Mind as themselves; and with that data, they have given advice as to the way in which questions of Morality should be solved. But, as the data of these

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philosophers is not correct, their principle of determining questions of Morality becomes one-sided and insufficient. Not only is this so, but their writings give rise to the foolish impression that if instead of troubling about making his Mind, nature, or moral character more and more pure and sin-fearing, a man learns to make a proper calculation about the external effects of his Actions, that will be quite enough for him to become 'moral'; and therefore, those persons who

have not overcome their selfish natures, become crafty, scheming, or hypocritical (Gītā 3.6); and the whole of society is likely to suffer to that extent. Therefore, the doctrine of the Gītā that, (i) considering the external effects of Action, even merely as a test of Morality, is insufficient and inferior (kṛpāṇa); and that (ii) in this matter, that is, in Karma-Yoga (a) one has ultimately to rely on the Equability of Reason, which is expressed in external Actions, and which remains unchanged even in times of adversity, and (b) the true test of Righteous Action is Knowledge-full and unlimited Pure Reason, or rectitude, is, in my opinion, more to the point, more comprehensive, more correct, and more faultless than the Western Intuitionist or Materialistic doctrines.

Leaving aside the Materialistic and Intuitionist works on the Philosophy of Ethics by Western writers, and considering only those works which deal with the subject purely from the Metaphysical point of view, it will be seen that in them, as in the Gītā, Purity of Reason is considered of greater value than the Action itself. For instance, take the 'Metaphysics of Morals' and other books on Morality written by Kant. Although Kant has not adopted the doctrine of the unity of the Ātman in all created beings, yet, after minutely considering the question of Pure Reason and Practical Reason, he has come to the

conclusions [1] that: (1) rather than determining the ethical value of any particular act, by considering its

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external result, namely, how many persons will be benefited and to what extent, one should determine that value by considering to what extent the Practical Reason (*vāsanā*) or Desire of that person is pure; (2) this Desire (or Practical Reason, i.e., *vāsanātmaka buddhi*) of a man can be considered to be pure, stainless, and independent, only when,, instead of being engrossed in the happiness of the organs, it remains continually within the control of the Pure Reason (that is to say, when it acts according to the dictates of the Pure Reason regarding the Duty and the Non-Duty); (3) there is no necessity of laying down rules of Morality for that man whose Desire has become purified in this way, as a result of the control of the organs, after it has been so purified; these rules are necessary only for ordinary persons; (4) when the Desire has been purified in this way, whatever acts it inspires the man to do, are dictated after considering "what will happen to me, if someone else does to me what I do to him," and (5) this purity

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[1] See Kant's Theory of Ethics, translated by Abbott, 6th Edition. This book contains all these propositions; the first proposition is at pages 10, 12, 16, and 24; the second, at pages 112 and 117; the third, at pages 31, 68, 121, and 290; the fourth, at pages 18, 38, 55, and 119; and the fifth, at pages 70 – 73 and 80.

or independence of Desire cannot be accounted for, unless one leaves the world of Action (karma-sṛṣṭi) and enters the world of the Brahman (brahma-sṛṣṭi). But as the ideas of Kant regarding the Ātman and the world of the Brahman, were to a certain extent incomplete, Green, though he belonged to the school of Kant, has, in his Prolegomena to Ethics (§§ 99, pages 174 – 179 and 223 – 232) first laid down that the inaccessible Principle, which saturates the external world, that is, the Cosmos (brahmāṇḍa) is partly incarnated in the shape of the Ātman in the piṇḍa (that is, in the human body); and he has later on laid down the propositions that (i) it is the intense Desire of that permanent and the independent Principle in the human body, namely, the Ātman, of Realising its most comprehensive, social, and all-pervading form, which compels human beings to perform good actions and that (ii) the permanent and un- changing happiness of man lies in this Realisation, whereas the happiness afforded by objects of pleasure is non-permanent. In short, it will be seen that though this point of view of both Kant and Green is Metaphysical, yet, Green has justified the discrimination between the Doable and Not-Doable, and the Freedom of Will, on the basis of the Pure Ātmic form which is seen uniformly expressed both in the Body (piṇḍa) and in



the Cosmos (brahmāṇḍa), instead of confining himself to the activities of Pure Reason. Although, these doctrines of Western Materialistic moral philosophers are not identical with the doctrines of the Gītā mentioned below, one will certainly see the strange similarity between the two. These doctrines of the Gītā are as follows: (1) the Desiring (i.e., vāsanātmika) Reason of the doer, is of higher importance than his external Actions; (2) when the Pure (vyavasāyātmika) Reason has become Self-Engrossed (ātma-niṣṭhā), and free from, doubt, and equable, the Practical Reason of itself also becomes pure and holy; (3) that Sthitaprajña whose Reason has become equable and steady in this way, is himself always beyond Rules of Conduct; (4) his behaviour, or the Rules of Morality arising out of his Self-Identifying Reason, become authoritative and standards for ordinary men; and (5) there is only one Principle in the shape of the Ātman, which pervades both the Body (piṇḍa) and the Cosmos (brahmāṇḍa), and the Ātman within the body craves to Realise (this is Release, or Mokṣa) its pure and all-comprehensive form; and when a man has Realised this pure form, he acquires the Self- Identifying (ātmaupamya) vision towards all created things. Yet, as the doctrines of Vedānta philosophy with reference to the Brahman, the Ātman, Illusion (Māyā), Freedom of Will, Identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, Causality etc., are much more advanced and definite than the doctrines of Kant and Green, the disquisition on Karma-Yoga made in the Gītā. on the authority of Vedānta and of the Upaniṣads is metaphysically much more unambiguous

and complete; and the modern German Vedāntist Prof. Deussen has, in his book *Elements of Metaphysics*, accepted this same method of dealing with Ethics. Deussen was a follower of Schopenhauer, and he has accepted in toto the doctrine of Schopenhauer that "it is impossible to destroy unhappiness, unless Desire is destroyed, in as much as Desire is the cause of worldly life; and it is the duty of everyone to destroy Desire"; and he has clearly shown in the third part of his book referred to above, how all principles of Ethics can be substantiated on the basis of this Metaphysical proposition. After showing that Desireless

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Action is the sign and the result of Destruction of Desire,, since (i) Abandonment of Action is totally unnecessary for destroying Desire, or after Desire has been destroyed, and (ii) the fact whether Desire has been destroyed or not, can be proved by nothing so well as by Actions performed desirelessly for the benefit of others, Deussen has laid down the proposition that, Desirelessness of the Mind, is the root of proper behaviour and of Morality; and he has at the end of his argument quoted the verse "tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samācara" (Gī. 3.19), [1] which shows that he must have thought of this argument by reading the Gītā. Whatever may

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[1] See Deussen's *Elements of Metaphysics*, Eng. Translator., 1909 p. 304.

be the truth, the fact that these ideas were universally current in our country long before Deussen, Green, Schopenhauer, and Kant, and even possibly hundreds of years before Aristotle, is not a small matter. Many persons are now-a-days under the impression that Vedānta means giving up family life and entering the dry process of acquiring Release; but this idea is not correct. Vedānta philosophy has come into existence for considering as scientifically as possible such deep and difficult questions as, (i) going beyond whatever can be actually seen in the world and determining who man is, (ii) determining what the Principle at the bottom of the universe is, (iii) defining the relation between man and that Principle, and, what the highest ideal of man in this world is, having regard to that relation; (iv) finding out the mode of life which must be adopted by man in order to reach that ideal, or (v) in what way,, which ideal can be reached etc. etc.; and strictly speaking, the whole of Ethics, or the consideration of how men should be- have towards each other in worldly life, will be seen to be a part of that profound philosophy. Therefore, Karma-Yoga has to be justified on the basis of Vedānta; and whatever the followers of the Path of Renunciation may say, Vedānta philosophy undoubtedly falls into the two divisions of Pure Vedānta and" Moral or Practical Vedānta, in the same way as Mathematics is divided into Pure Mathematics and Applied Mathematics. Kant even says that the moot questions about the 'Parameśvara" (the Highest Ātman), 'Immortality,' and 'Freedom (of Will)'"

have come into the human mind, only as a result of considering the Ethical questions, "How should I behave in the world?" , or, "What is my true duty in this -world"?; and that deciding: questions of Morality by a calculation of the pure external happiness of mankind, without satisfactorily answering these ethical questions, will result in encouraging the animal instincts in the human mind, which are fascinated by objects of pleasure, and thereby cutting at the very root of the principles of true Morality. [1] It is not necessary now to explain in so many words why and how Vedānta has entered the Gītā, even if the subject-matter of the Gītā is Karma-Yoga. Kant has written two books on this subject, which are known as the Critique of Pure Reason and the Critique of Practical Reason. But as the Bhagavadgītā not only deals with both these subjects consistently with the philosophy of the Upaniṣads, but also includes a disquisition on the Path of

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[1] "Empiricism, on the contrary, cuts up at the roots of the morality of intentions (in which, and not in actions only, consists the high worth that men can and ought to give themselves)... Empiricism, moreover, being on this account allied with all the inclinations which (no matter what fashion they put on) degrade humanity when they are raised to the dignity of a supreme practical example is for that reason much more dangerous than mysticism" Kant's Theory of Ethics pp. 163 and 236 – 238. See also Kant's Critique of Pure Reason (trans, by Max Müller) 2nd Ed. pp. 640 – 657.

Devotion based on Religious Faith, it has become acceptable and authoritative on all hands.

If, keeping the question of Release aside for the time being, 'Equability of Reason' is accepted as important, as being the moral principle involved in the discernment of the Doable- and the Not-doable, it also becomes necessary to briefly consider why and how other paths arose in the Philosophy of Ethics, in addition to that of the Metaphysics of the Gītā. Dr. Paul Carus [1], a well-known American philosopher, answers- this question in his book on Ethics by saying that: "a man's ideas about the fundamental principles of Ethics vary according to his idea of the mutual relationship between the Body (piṇḍa) and the Cosmos (brahmāṇḍa). Unless there is some

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definite belief regarding the inter-relation between the Body and the Cosmos, no question of Morality can really speaking

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[1] See The Ethical Problem by Dr. Carus, 2nd Ed., p. 111. "Our proposition is that the leading principle in ethics must be derived from the philosophical view back of it. The world-conception a man has, can alone give character to the principle in his ethics. Without any world-conception, we have no ethics (i.e., ethics in the highest sense of the word). We may act morally like dreamers or somnambulists, but our ethics would in that case be a mere moral instinct without any rational insight into its *raison d' être*".

arise. It is possible that we may behave morally, although we may have no definite belief as regards this inter-relation; but, as this behaviour will be like something done in sleep, it would be more proper to refer to it as some bodily (kāyika) activity resulting from bodily laws, instead of referring to it as moral behaviour". For instance, a tigress is ready to sacrifice her own life for protecting her cubs; but we do not say that this her behaviour is a moral act, but we say that it is her inherent nature. This answer very well explains how several schools of thought have arisen in the matter of principles of Ethics. Because, that principle which solves the questions, 'Who am I?', 'How was the world created? ', 'What is my use in this world?', etc., is the principle by which every thinking person ultimately decides the question how he is to behave towards other people in his life. But these questions cannot be answered in the same way in different countries and at different times. According to the Christian religion, which is in vogue in Europe, the Creator of man and of the Universe is the qualityful Parameśvara mentioned in the Bible; and it is stated there that He first created the world, and laid down the Commandments of moral conduct for man; and Christian philosophers were originally of the opinion that these Commandments, which were laid down consistently with the idea relating to the Body and the Cosmos mentioned in the Bible, were the root of all Morality. When it was found later on that these Commandments were insufficient to meet all the ordinary activities of life, it came to be maintained that the

Almighty (Parameśvara) had given Conscience to man in order to supplement or clarify these Commandments. But, as they later on realised the difficulty that a thief and an honest man have not the same kind of Conscience, there came into vogue the opinion that (i) although the Will of the Almighty was the foundation of Ethics, yet this His Will had to be ascertained by considering in what the greatest good of the greatest number lay; and that (ii) there was no other means of understanding the nature of that Will. All these opinions are on the basis of the belief of the Christian people, regarding the mutual inter-relation of the Body and the Cosmos, to the effect that some qualityful Almighty is the creator of the world, and that it is His Desire or Commandment that man should act morally. But when, as a result of the growth of the Material sciences, it came to be seen that the doctrines enunciated in the Christian scriptures regarding the creation of the Body and the Cosmos were not correct, the question whether there was or was not some creator of the world like the Parameśvara came to be left aside, and the question whether, or not the edifice of Ethics and morality could be erected on the foundation of things which were actually visible began to be considered; and it began to be maintained that the greatest happiness or benefit of the greatest number, or the growth of 'humanness', were the visible principles which were the fundamental principles of

Ethics. In this exposition, no reason is adduced as to why a man should try to obtain the greatest good of the greatest number; and it is only said that such is the constantly growing inherent tendency of mankind. But, as human nature also includes other visible tendencies like selfishness etc., there arose differences of opinion even in this school of thought. It is not that these expositions of Ethics are entirely faultless. But, as all the philosophers belonging to this school of thought, placed no belief or confidence in the proposition that there is at the bottom of the universe some imperceptible Element, which is beyond the visible objects in the universe, they have always attempted to somehow or other explain away all the difficulties which arise in their path by some external or visible principles. It will be seen from this how, although everyone is

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in favour of Ethics and Morality, there is always a divergence in the various expositions, on account of there being different opinions regarding the construction and the inter-relation of the Body and the Cosmos; and that is why I have divided the exposition of Ethics into three divisions in the third chapter of this book according to the Materialistic, Intuitionist, and Metaphysical view-points regarding the construction of the Body and the Cosmos; and have afterwards considered individually the most important doctrines of each school of thought. Those who believe that the entire visible universe



was created by some qualityful Parameśvara, do not consider the question of Morality beyond considering the Commandments of the Almighty as given in their scriptures, or the dictates of Conscience, which according to them, was created by the power of that Parameśvara. I have called this school of thought the 'Intuitionist' (ādhidaivika) school; because, a qualityful Parameśvara is after all a deity. Those who believe that there is no invisible Principle at the root of the universe, or that if any such principle exists, it is inaccessible to human intelligence, erect the edifice of Morality on the foundation of the principle of the greatest good of the greatest number or the highest development of humanness, which are visible principles. I have named -this school of thought, the 'Materialistic' (ādhibhautika) school. Those who believe that there is some eternal and intangible Principle like the Ātman at the root of the Name-d and Form-ed universe, take the exposition of Ethics beyond the Materialistic exposition; and they decide' the question of the duty of human beings in this world by harmonising the Knowledge of the Ātman with Morality or religion. This school of thought has been named by me 'Metaphysical' (ādhyātmika) school. The actual practical Morality of these three schools is one and the same; but, as the opinion of each school of thought regarding the construction and inter-relation of the Body and the Cosmos is different, the fundamental principles of Ethics are slightly different in, each school. Just as Grammar does not create a new language, but only finds out the rules

relating to the language in ordinary use, and helps the growth of that language, so is the case with Ethics. Ever since the day on which the human being came

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into existence in this world, man has been keeping his conduct pure with the help of his own intelligence, according to the circumstances of his country and of his times; and those high-principled and noble-minded people, who have come to birth from time to time, have laid down rules for the purification of behaviour, in the shape of inspirational commands (codanā), according to their own ideas. The philosophy of Ethics has not come into existence for breaking up these rules and making new rules. Rules of Ethics, such as, "Do not commit murder", "Speak the truth", "Do good unto others" etc., have been in vogue from ancient times. But Ethics has to consider only what the basic principles of Morality are, in order that it should be convenient to expand those principles of Morality; and therefore, whatever school of ethical thought is taken, the rules of Ethics, which are now in vogue, are everywhere more or less the same. The only differences which arise in these rules, are regarding the form of the exposition of those rules; and the statement of Dr. Paul Carus that the chief reason for these differences is the difference of opinion regarding the construction and inter-relation of the Body and the Cosmos is seen to be true.

The fact that Modern Western Materialistic philosophers, who have written on the subject of Ethics, such as, Mill, Spencer, Comte etc., have given up the easy and comprehensive principle of Self-Identification (ātmaupamya) and have attempted to erect the edifice of Morality on the external principle of 'Universal benefit' (sarvabhūta-hita), or 'the greatest good of the greatest, number', is due to the fact that their opinion regarding the construction of the Body and the Cosmos is different from the ancient opinions. When this has been thus proved by me, those who do not accept these new-fangled opinions, and wish to give deep consideration to such questions as "Who am I?"; 'What is the thing known as the universe?'; "How do I perceive this universe?"; "Is the external world independent of me, or not?"; "If so, what is the fundamental element at the root of it?"; "What is the relationship between that Element and myself?"; "Why should one man sacrifice his life for the sake of another?"; "If it is true, according to the rule, 'whatever has come into existence, is sure to die', that

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the world on which we live along with all created beings is sometime or other going to be destroyed, why should we destroy our own happiness for the sake of future mortal

generations?"; or, those persons again who are not satisfied with the solution, that philanthropy and other mental tendencies are the inherent tendencies of the visible, non-permanent, world of Action, and who wish to go to the root of these tendencies, cannot but turn to the eternal philosophy of the Absolute Self. And that is why Green has started his book on Ethics with the doctrine that the Ātman which comes to know the perceptible world, must be different from that perceptible world; and that is also why Kant has first dealt with Pure Reason and then written his Critique of Practical Reason or of Ethics. Although the statement that man is born for the happiness of himself or of many, may appear tempting at first sight, it is not really correct. If one considers for a moment whether those noble souls, who are prepared to sacrifice their lives only for the sake of Truth, do so only with the motive that future generations should have more and more of physical happiness, one is forced to admit that man must be having something as his highest ideal in this world, which (ideal) is more important than the transient material happiness of himself or of others. Which is that ideal? Those who have Realised the permanent, eternal, Element in the shape of the Ātman, which is clothed in the Name-d and Form-ed, that is, visible, though perishable, Appearance- of the Body and the Cosmos, by personal Realisation, reply to this question by saying that the first duty of every intelligent person in this world is to Realise the eternal, superior, pure, immortal, and all-pervasive form of his own Ātman, and to be merged in it.

That man, who has in this, way Realised the Unity of the Ātman pervading all created things, and every atom of whose body and organs is saturated with this Knowledge, does not stop to contemplate on the question whether the world is or is not transient, but automatically takes to the work of universal benefit, and becomes the protagonist of Truth. Because, he has fully Realised the true nature of the Eternal Truth, which is untouched by past, present, or future. This metaphysically perfect state of a man

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is the original source of all rules of Morality; and this what is known in Vedānta as 'Release' (mokṣa). Whatever system of Morality is taken, it cannot be independent of this ultimate ideal; and, therefore, in expounding Ethics or the Karma-Yoga, one cannot but surrender oneself to this principle. The desire for universal welfare is only a tangible form of the intangible fundamental principle of the Unity of the Ātman in all created things; and the qualityful Parameśvara, and the visible world, are nothing but visible forms of the imperceptible, all-pervasive, Ātman, which is embodied in all created things. And not only is Knowledge incomplete, unless one has gone beyond these visible forms and Realised that imperceptible form, but the highest ideal of every human being in this world, namely, reaching the ultimate perfect state of the Ātman in the Body, is not attained unless this Knowledge has been

acquired. Take the case of Morality, or of worldly life, or of religion, or of any other Science, Metaphysical Realisation is the ultimate culmination of all of them; of: "sarvaṁ karmākhilam pāṛtha jñāne parisamāpyate" (Gī. 4.33), (i.e., "O Pāṛtha, all Action whatsoever, ultimately culminates in Knowledge" ~Translator.); and as our Path of Devotion is based on this principle, the doctrine, 'the principle of Equability of Reason, which comes into existence as a result of Realisation, is the root of good conduct (sadācaraṇa) and of Release', remains unchanged even in the Path of Devotion. The only important objection against this principle, established by Vedānta philosophy, is the belief of some. Vedāntists, that it is absolutely essential to abandon all Action after one has come to the stage of Realisation. And therefore, the Gītā has, after showing that there is no conflict between Knowledge and Action, expatiated on the Karma-Yoga doctrine that Jñānins must, notwithstanding that they have destroyed Desire, perform all Actions, purely as duties, for universal benefit, and with the intention of dedicating them to the Parameśvara. It is true that the advice given to Arjuna is a special advice to fight, as he has been asked to fight and to dedicate all Actions to the Parameśvara; but that advice has been given consistently with the occasion which then existed (Gī. 8.7). All persons e.g., farmers, carpenters, ironmongers, agriculturists, grain-dealers

merchants, Brahmins, clerks, etc., must keep going their various activities pertaining to their respective positions in life, with the intention of dedicating them to the Parameśvara, and thereby carry out the maintenance and uplift of the world, in the same way as Arjuna; and the SUMMARY of all this advice is that when everyone in this way sticks to whatever profession or position in life is his by birth, with a desireless frame of mind, he, the doer, does not thereby commit any sin; that all Actions are essentially the same; that the fault, if any, lies in the Reason of the doer, and not in the Action (Karma); and that, when a man performs all Actions after equabilising his Reason, he thereby only performs the worship of the Parameśvara, and, not having committed any sin, ultimately attains Release. But, those persons, who have made a firm determination not to enter the deep waters of the consideration of the Ātman and the Non-Ātman by transgressing the borders of the perishable and visible universe, because it is improper to do so, (especially, in these modern days), give up the high level of man's highest ideal of Realising the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, and start the exposition of their philosophy of Ethics with the inconstant, if visible, Materialistic principles of 'the benefit of mankind', or 'the benefit of all created things'. But just as one cannot say that a tree has become a different tree, as a result of one's having lopped off the top of it, so also does the philosophy of Ethics invented by Materialistic philosophers not become a new philosophy, merely because it is headless or

incomplete. Even in our India, Sāṃkhya philosophers, who do not admit the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, and who look upon each Puruṣa (Spirit) as a separate entity, have fixed the characteristics of the three constituents, sattva, rajas and tamas, after considering which of those constituents is responsible for the maintenance of the world, and which, for the destruction of the world; and they have maintained that it is the duty of every man to reach the highest state of the sātṭvika constituent, and that by doing so, one attains the state of the Triguṇātīta (beyond the three constituents), and acquires Release; and the same import has been conveyed, with a slight difference, in the seventeenth and the eighteenth chapters of

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the Gītā. [1] Whether you call it the 'highest development of the sātṭvika constituent' or, you call it the 'highest expansion of philanthropy, or humanness' in Materialistic terminology, it is just the same. Not only have all these Materialistic principles been fully enunciated both in the Mahābhārata and in the Gītā, but it is clearly stated in the Mahābhārata, that if one considers the worldly or the external use of rules of Right and

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[1] The book named, The Hindu System of Moral Science written by Babu Kishorilal Sircar M. A., B. L., is of this kind, that is, it is based on the foundation of the three constituents, sattva, rajas, and tamas.



Wrong (dharmādharmā), one sees that these moral rules are for the good of all created beings, that is, for universal good. But, instead of somehow or other getting rid of the matter like Materialistic philosophers, by relying merely on the Perceptible, and indulging in verbosity because they have no faith in the Imperceptible, although they realise that Materialistic principles are insufficient for philosophically distinguishing between the Duty and the Non-duty, the Blessed Lord has in the Gītā taken the ladder of these principles right up to the fundamental, imperceptible, and permanent Element at the root of the Body and Cosmos, and established a complete harmony between Release, Morality, and worldly life on the basis of philosophy; and, therefore, it has been clearly stated in the beginning of the Anugītā (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 16.12) that the principles, which have been enunciated for distinguishing between the Duty and the Non-duty, ultimately lead to Release. Those who are of the opinion that it is not necessary to harmonise the science of Release with Ethics, or Metaphysics with Morality, will not realise the importance of this exposition. But such people as are not indifferent about this matter, will certainly consider the argument in support of Karma-Yoga as superior to or more acceptable, than the purely Materialistic exposition of the subject. As philosophy was not as highly developed metaphysically in any country in ancient times as in India, it was not possible that such a Metaphysical exposition of

Karma-Yoga (Right Action) should have been made in any country; nor has it been so made.

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I have considered in the eleventh chapter above the pros and cons of the doctrine that, rather than abandoning Action some- time or other in this life, it is better to continue performing the same Actions, desirelessly and for the public welfare, cf: "karma, jyāyo hy akarmaṇah" (i.e., "Action is superior to Inaction" ~Translator.), which has been enunciated in the Gītā, notwithstanding that it accepts the position that worldly life is inconstant, and that there is more of unhappiness than happiness in such life (Gī. 9.33). But, in comparing this Karma-Yoga of the Gītā with the Western philosophy of Action, or our philosophy of Renunciation with the Western philosophy of Abandonment of Action (karma-tyāga), it is necessary to deal at greater length with this matter. The doctrine that Release cannot be attained, unless one goes out of this painful and insipid worldly life, was first brought into the Vedic religion by the writers of the Upaniṣads and the Sāṃkhya philosophers. The prior Vedic religion was Energistic, that is to say, it dealt with ritualistic Action, But, if one considers religions other than the Vedic religion, it will be seen that most of them had accepted the Path of Renunciation from the very commencement. For instance, the Jain and Buddhistic religions are both from the very beginning in favour

of Renunciation; and the preaching of Christ is also to the same effect. The original Christian religion has preached the same principle: as was preached by Buddha to his disciples, namely: "abandon worldly life, live like an ascetic, and do not look at or speak with women" (Mahāparinibbāṇa Sutta 5.23). Whereas Christ preached: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself (Matthew 19.19), St. Paul has preached "Whether therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (I. Cori. 10.31); and both these commandments are similar to the preaching of the Gītā, that. all Actions should be performed by Self-Identification and with the idea of dedicating them to God (Gī. 6.29 and 9.27). But from that it does not follow, that the Christian religion is Energistic like the Gītā religion; because, the ultimate ideal of the Christian religion is, that man should attain immortality, and be redeemed; and as the Christian religion has maintained that that ideal cannot be reached without giving up one's

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home, the original religion of Christ must be said to have been renunciatory. Not only did Christ himself remain unmarried till the end of his life, but when a young man came and said to Him: "I have from my youth up followed all such commandments as 'Honour thy father and thy mother', 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' etc.; what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?", Christ gave him the plain answer: "If

thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me" (Matthew, 19.16 – 30 and Mark, 10.21 – 31); and immediately afterwards He turned to His disciples and said:– "It is easier for a camel to go through, the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God". One may safely say that this is only a copy of the advice given by Yājñavalkya to Maitreyī that: "amṛtatvasya tu nāśāsti vittena" (Br. 2. 4. 2), i.e., "if you have money, you need not entertain any hope of obtaining immortality". Christ has nowhere preached what has been preached by the Gītā, namely, that for obtaining immortality, it is not necessary to give up worldly life, and that it is enough if all Actions in such life are performed desirelessly. On the other hand, whereas Christ has preached that, as there is a permanent conflict between worldly wealth and God (cf: "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon", Matthew 6.24), therefore, "if any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14.26), St. Paul, the disciple of Christ has preached that: "It is good for a man not to touch a woman" (I. Cori. 7. 1). In the same way, I have shown above the similarity between the statement in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (Br. 4.4.22) that, "kim prajāyā kariṣyāmo yeṣāṃ no 'yam ātmā 'yam lokah", (i.e., "as we see that the whole world is nothing but our Ātman, why should we have any (other) generation?"; see p. 433, Vol. I supra

~Translator.), and the following words uttered by Christ: "Who is my mother? and who [1] are my brethren? For whosoever shall do the will of

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my Father, which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matthew, 12.46 – 50). It follows from these statements in the Bible itself, that the Christian religion, like the Jainism or Buddhism, originally advocated the giving up of worldly life, that is, supported Renunciation; and if one considers the ancient history of the Christian religion, it is seen that consistently with the preaching of the Lord Christ to his disciples that: "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses", the earliest of Christian preachers used to live in a state of Renunciation. [2] The practice of Christian preachers

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- [1] This is the standing advice of those who advocate the Path of Renunciation. The words "kā te kāntā kas te putraḥ" (i.e., "what is thy wife? what is thy son?" ~Translator.) uttered by Śaṅkarācārya are well-known; and there is a statement in the Buddhacarita (Life of Buddha) by Aśvaghoṣa (6.45) that Buddha had said:– "kvāhaṁ mātuh kva sā mama" (i.e., "what am I to my mother, what is she to me?" ~Translator.)
- [2] See Paulsen's System of Ethics (Eng. trans) Book. I, Chap. 2 and 3; esp. pp. 89 – 97. "The new (Christian) converts seemed to renounce their family and country... their gloomy and austere aspect, their abhorrence of the common business and pleasures of life, and their frequent predictions of impending calamities inspired the pagans with the apprehension of some danger which would arise from the new sect".

or of followers of Christ, of taking up the state of householders and leading a family life, is the result of the reform which came afterwards; that was not the original Christian religion. Even in these days, people like Schopenhauer maintain that worldly life is full of pain, and on that account discardable; and I have mentioned before that the question whether it was better to spend one's life in philosophical contemplation, or to spend it in diplomatic activity for public welfare, had arisen in Greece in ancient times. In short, this Western philosophy of the Abandonment of Action and our philosophy of Renunciation are to a great extent similar to

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each other; and one may safely say that the Western method of supporting that philosophy is the same as the Eastern method. But, as the reasons given by Western philosophers for proving that the Path of Action is better than that of Abandonment of Action are different from the reasons adduced in the Gītā for following Energism, this difference must be mentioned here. The supporters of the Western

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Historian's History of the World, Vol. VI. p. 318. The German poet Goethe has, in his poem Faust said:— Thou shalt renounce; that is the eternal song which rings in everyone's ears; which our whole life long, every hour is hoarsely singing to us" (Faust. Part I lines 1195 – 1198). I can quote many other authorities in support of the position that the original Christian religion was renunciatory.

Materialistic Path of Action say, that we must look upon the greatest good of the greatest number or of all the beings in the world – that is, their Material happiness– as the highest ideal in this world,, and that it is the duty of everybody, while working for the happiness of everybody else, to also become engrossed in the same happiness; and for supporting this position, many of the philosophers say, that there is more of happiness than of unhappiness in life. From this point of view, one has to say that the followers of the Western Path of Action are such as- "take part in the worldly life in the hope of obtaining, happiness", and that those who follow the Western Path of Abandonment of Action are "tired of worldly life"; and for this reason, they are respectively called 'Optimists' and 'Pessimists'. [1] But the two paths mentioned in the Bhagavad-Gītā are different from these paths. By being induced to take part in worldly life by the enticement of physical material pleasure, whether one's own or of other people, the sāttvika mental frame in the shape of Equability of Reason suffers to a certain extent at least. The Gītā, therefore, says that (a) whether worldly life is productive of happiness or of unhappiness, if one cannot give up worldly affairs even if one

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[1] James Sally has in his book called Pessimism described the two paths of Optimists and Pessimists. Out of these 'Optimist' means 'enthusiastic', and 'Pessimist' means 'tired of life'; and I have mentioned in a previous note (see p. 420 supra), that these words are synonymous with the words 'Yoga' and 'Sāmkhya" used in the Gītā; and the same idea is explained above in detail. There is a third path who 'desire to prevent unhappiness', and Sully has described this path as 'Melliorism'.

wants to do- so, there is no sense in considering whether they produce happiness or unhappiness; that (b) whether there is happiness or unhappiness, one must consider it a great good fortune

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that one has got a human birth; and that (c) it is the duty of every human being to (i) suffer whatever fate befalls him in the inevitable activity of this world of Action, without allowing his heart to be discouraged, and with an equable frame of mind, as described in the words, " duḥkṛyeṣu anudvignamanāḥ sukḥeṣu vigataḥsprṛhaḥ" (Gī. 2. 56.), (i.e., "with an undejected mind in the midst of unhappiness. and being free from desire in the midst of pleasures" ~Translator.), and to {ii} go on performing life-long whatever portion of Action has fallen on one's shoulders, for the maintenance of the world, according to one's status in life, consistently with the injunctions of the Śāstras, and not for this purpose or that purpose, but desirelessly. In the times of the Gītā, the arrangement of the four castes was in full swing; and that is why it is stated in the Gītā that different social duties are allocated to different persons according to the arrangement of the four castes; and it is shown in the eighteenth chapter how these differences arise according to the divisions of the constituents and of Karma (Gī. 18.41 – 44). But, one must not, on that account, draw the conclusion that the principles of Ethics enunciated in



the Gītā apply only to the arrangement of the four castes. The writer of the Mahābhārata was fully alive to the fact that the compass of the principles of Ethics like, Non-Violence (ahimsā) etc., is not restricted to the four castes, and that these principles ordinarily apply to the whole of mankind. It is, therefore, clearly stated in the Bhārata, that the maintenance of the Non-Aryans, who were outside the four castes who observed these principles, must be made by the king according to these general Ethical principles (Śān. 65.12.22); and instead of making the exposition of principles of Ethics depend on any particular arrangement of society, such as the arrangement of the four castes, the Gītā has based it on universal Metaphysical philosophy. The chief conclusion of the Ethics of the Gītā is, that, one must perform all one's duties according to the Śāstras, desirelessly, and by Self-Identification; and this applies equally well to all persons in all countries. But, although this universal principle of Ethics of a Self-Identifying vision and of; 'Desireless Action is thus established, it is also necessary to give Some explanation of how those Actions,

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to which that principle has to be applied, fall to the lot of different persons in this world. The arrangement of the four castes has, therefore, been mentioned in the Gītā, as it was the most simple and natural illustration, which applied to the circumstances of that particular age; and the arrangement of

society in those days has been concisely explained in the Gītā according to the division of 'constituents of Matter' (guṇa). and Action. But this is not the principle idea of the Gītā; and it must be borne in mind that the comprehensive doctrine of the Gītā is that, even where this arrangement of four castes is not in vogue, or is not rigorously observed, a human being comes into existence to perform whatever duties come to his share, for the maintenance of society, according to the arrangement of society which may then be in vogue, as duties, desirelessly, courageously, and enthusiastically, for the public good, and not for the enjoyment of pleasure; and the opinion advanced by some that the Ethics expounded in the Gītā is based on the arrangement of the four castes is not correct. The Gītā says that whether the society is a Hindu society or a non-Hindu society, whether it is an ancient society or a modern society, whether it is an Eastern society or a Western society, if the arrangement of the four castes applies to that society, then according to that arrangement, and if it does not apply, then according to any other arrangement of society which may be applicable to it, that duty which has fallen on one's shoulders or which, being possible, may have been taken up by one as a duty, of one's own choice, becomes a moral duty; and giving up these moral duties, and, on the spur of the moment, taking up that which is proper for someone else, on some pretext or other, is wrong from the point of view of Morality, as also from the point of view of public good. This is what is meant by the statement in the Gītā: "svadharme nidhanaṁ śreyah

paradharmo bhayāvahaḥ" (Gī. 3.35), i.e., "even if one has to die in the performance of those duties which are one's own, that is meritorious.; but, taking up the duties (dharma) of another person is dangerous"; and, it is well-known in the Maharashtra that Rama Shastribuva said to the elder Madhavrao Peshva, who was a Brahmin by caste, and who had taken up the career of a soldier having regard to the

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circumstances prevailing at the time, that: "by your not wasting time in prayer and worship, but spending it for protecting society by taking up the career of a soldier, you will acquire happiness in this life and in the next". The chief object of the Gītā is not to show what would be the proper arrangement for the maintenance of society. The summary of the Gītā religion is that, whatever the arrangement of society may be, one should enthusiastically perform all the duties which have come to one's share, according to one's status in life, and acquire the benefit of the Ātman in the shape of the happiness of all created things. It is true that the Actions, which the Sthitaprajña of the Gītā performs by way of duties, are naturally productive of public good. But, the Sthitaprajña of the Gītā does not entertain the egotistical feeling that 'I' am by 'MY' actions causing public good; and, as Equability of Reason has become an inherent nature with him, all the Actions which are performed by him, purely as duties,

according to whatever arrangement of society may be in vogue at any particular time, are naturally productive of public good. The modern Western moral philosopher, on the other hand considers worldly life as an embodiment of happiness, and bespeaks the performance of Actions which produce public good in order to enable everybody to obtain this happiness of worldly life: this is the important difference between the Karma-Yoga of the Gītā and the Western Materialistic Path of Action.

Nevertheless, it is not that all modern Western philosophers subscribing to the Path of Action, consider worldly life as productive of happiness. There is also a class of Karma-Yogins in the West like Schopenhauer, who, while admitting that worldly life is principally full of unhappiness, maintain, that one should not give up worldly life, but should try as much as possible to reduce the unhappiness of others since it is the duty of a wise man to reduce this general unhappiness as much as possible; or who desire 'to reduce unhappiness'. And there is a great deal of similarity between this path and the Karma-Yoga of the Gītā. Where it is stated in the Mahābhārata that: "sukhād bahutaraṁ duḥkhaṁ jīvite nātra saṁśayaḥ", i.e., "in worldly life, unhappiness

is proportionately greater than happiness", it is also stated by Manu to Bṛhaspati and by Nārada to Śuka that:

na jānapadikaṃ duḥkhaṃ ekaḥ śocitum arhati ।  
aśocan pratikurvīta yadi paśyed upakramam ॥ (Śān.  
305.5 and 330.15),

that is, "it is not proper to lament about that unhappiness which is universal; instead of lamenting about the matter, one (the Jñānin) should use such means as occur to him for obviating that unhappiness". From this it becomes quite clear, that even the writer of the Mahābhārata had accepted the doctrine that, although worldly life is full of unhappiness the wise man should busy himself with reducing such universal unhappiness. But, this is not what the Gītā is trying to preach. There must still be a considerable amount of improvement in the Western Karma-Yoga which attempts to reduce unhappiness, before it can come to the level of the Karma-Yoga in the Gītā, which gives greater importance to the happiness resulting from Self-Identification, than to mere Material happiness, and which preaches that all worldly affairs should be carried on, while experiencing this happiness born of Self-Identification, merely because they are duties, and without entertaining the rājasa pride that, "I" (the doer) am performing Action with the idea of reducing the unhappiness of others". Western philosophers are always more or less engulfed in the idea that Material happiness, whether of oneself or of others, is the true highest ideal of man in this

world – whether that ideal is reached by increasing the means of happiness or by reducing unhappiness – it is not possible to find in their philosophy, the desireless Karma-Yoga of the Gītā, which looks upon worldly life as inevitable, although it might be productive of unhappiness, and preaches Action for universal good (loka-saṁgraha). It is true that all these persons follow the Path of Action; but it is easy to see the difference between the two, even from the point of view of Pure Morality, namely, that the Western Energism desires happiness or desires the obviating of unhappiness, that is to say, in either case, desires something, and is sakāma (based on Desire), whereas the Karma-Yoga of the Gītā is always

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indifferent about the Fruit of Action – or, if the same meaning is conveyed in other words, the Karma-Yoga of the Gītā is sātत्वika and the Karma-Yoga of the West is rājasā (Gī. 18.23 and 24).

The Energistic path, or the Path of Karma-Yoga based on Spiritual Knowledge, of continually performing all worldly affairs as pure duties with the idea of dedicating them to the Parameśvara, and thereby making a sacrifice to, or worshipping lifelong, the Parameśvara, which has been preached by the Gītā, is known as the 'Bhāgavata religion'. The

essence of this path is contained in the words: "sve sve karmaṇy abhirataḥ saṁsiddhiṁ labhate naraḥ" (Gī. 18.45). This doctrine has been propounded in the Vana-parva in the story of the Brahmin and the hunter (Vana. 208), and in the Śānti-parva in the conversation between the merchant Tulādhāra and Jājali (Śān. 261) in the Mahābhārata, and even in the Manu-Smṛti, after the enunciation of the path to be followed by ascetics, it is stated that this Karma-Yoga of the Vedānta's ascetic (veda-saṁnyāsika) should also be followed, and that it will lead to Release (Manu. 6.96, 97). It becomes clear from the word 'veda-saṁnyāsika' (Vedāntist ascetic), as also from the descriptions to be found in the Veda-Saṁhitās and in the Brāhmaṇas, that this path had been in vogue in our India from times immemorial. Nay, if it were otherwise, our country would never have reached that prosperity, which it had; for, it is clear that in any country whatsoever, the persons who wield the destinies of the country must be supporters of the Path of Action. But the important point of our Karma-Yoga is that even such nation-builders must, without giving up the Knowledge of the Brahman, keep Action inter-linked with it; and, as has been stated above, this path came to be called the 'Bhāgavata religion,' because the Blessed Lord Bhagavān enunciated this path logically, and emphasised it, and gave it wide circulation. On the other hand, it becomes quite clear from the Upaniṣads that some Jñānin were inherently inclined from the very beginning towards the Path of Saṁnyāsa; or at any rate, that after going through the state of a house-holder in the

beginning, they, towards the end of their lives, used to conceive the desire of taking up Asceticism,

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whether they actually took it up or not. Therefore, it cannot also be said that the Path of Renunciation (saṁnyāsa) was something new. But; there is no doubt that, although both these paths were in this way in vogue in India since ancient times, on account of diversity of human nature, yet, in the times of the Vedas, the path of Ritualistic Action of the Mīmāṃsā school was more in favour; and that in the times of the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas, the Karma-Yoga had to a great extent put the Path of Renunciation into shade. Because, our religious treatises have clearly said that in the Kali-yuga, that is, after the date of the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas, the Path of Renunciation was prohibited; and in as much as every religion is *prima facie* a sign of whatever is customary at that time, according to the rule, "acāraprabhavo dharmah" (i.e., "Morality springs from custom" ~Translator.), (Ma. Bhā. Anu. 149, 137; Manu. 1.108), it is quite clear that the Path of Renunciation (saṁnyāsa) must have lost ground as a custom long before the writers of the religious Śāstras enunciated this prohibitory rule [1]. The question now naturally arises as to

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[1] See the quotations given above in the footnote to p.476, Vol. I of this book.



why this Karma-Yoga based on Spiritual Knowledge, which was at one time in full swing, started its decadence, if it was in this way predominant in the beginning and matters had come to the stage of considering the Path of Renunciation as objectionable in the Kali-yuga; and why the opinion has gained ground even in the Path of Devotion, that the Path of Renunciation alone was superior. Some persons say that this difference was brought about by the first Śaṁkarācārya. But if one considers history, it will be seen that this idea is not correct. As has been stated by me already in the first chapter, the teachings of the school of Śaṁkarācārya fall into two divisions, (1) Knowledge or Realisation of Non-Duality based on the doctrine of Māyā (Illusion), and (2) the Path of the Renunciation of Action. Out of these two, although the Upaniṣads have advocated Renunciation along with the Realisation of the Non-Dual Brahman, yet, as this inter-relation between the two is not of a permanent nature, it does not follow from the acceptance of

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the Non-Dualistic Vedānta, that one must also accept the doctrine of Renunciation. For instance, not only were Janaka and others, who had fully learnt the Non-Dualistic Vedānta from Yājñavalkya and others, followers of the Path of Action, but even the Gītā has advocated the Path of Action based on Spiritual Knowledge, instead of advocating, the Path of

Renunciation, although it has adopted the doctrine of the Realisation of the Non-Dual Brahman from the Upaniṣads. Therefore, it must be first borne in mind that the accusation against the School of Śaṁkarācārya that it encouraged Renunciation, does not apply to the Non-Dualistic basis of that cult, but may probably be ranged against the doctrine of Renunciation included in the cult. Although this Path of Renunciation was not something new which had been invented by Śrī Śaṁkarācārya, yet, it is true that he removed the inferiority which had become attached to it, as it had been, included among the things prohibited in the Kali-yuga. But, if the Path of Renunciation had not acquired favour with people before the date of Śaṁkarācārya for some other reason, it is doubtful whether his advocacy of Renunciation would have gained as much ground as it did. Christ has said that when one cheek has been slapped, one should proffer the other- cheek also for being slapped (Luke. 6.29). But if one considers how many followers of this position are to be found among; the European kingdoms, it will be seen that something does not come into vogue merely because a religious preacher has praised it, but that there are at first some other substantial reasons why the minds of people are attracted towards it, and why there is thereafter a change in the public customs, and a sympathetic change in the religious rules. This is what is meant by the saying in the Smṛtis that 'Custom is the root of law or religion'. Schopenhauer sponsored the Path of Renunciation in Germany in the last century; but we find that that seed has not

even yet taken root in that country; and Nietzsche has found greater favour there than Schopenhauer; and even if we turn to India, we find that although the Path of saṁnyāsa was already in vogue in the times of the Vedas long before Śaṁkarācārya, it had never put the Karma-Yoga into the shade. It is true that there are directions in the Smṛtis

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that one should renounce the world towards the end of life. But they too have not done away with Action in the previous stages of life; and although the works of Śaṁkarācārya advocate Abandonment of Action, yet, his own life bears testimony to the fact that he had no objection to Jñānins, or even Saṁnyāsins, performing the Action of universal welfare according to their own qualifications, e. g., for establishing religion (Ve. Sū. Śāṁ. Bhā. 3.3.32). If the teaching of Śaṁkarācārya based on the Smṛtis had been responsible for the predominance of the Path of Renunciation, Rāmānujācārya, who belongs to the modern Bhāgavata school, would have had no reason to give an inferior position to the Karma-Yoga in his commentary on the Gītā, in the same way as Śaṁkarācārya. But, if the Karma-Yoga, which had once been very powerful, has been put into shade even by the renunciatory Path of Devotion included in the Bhāgavata cult, one must say that there must have been some other reasons for its having thus lost ground, which apply equally to all

countries or all cults. In my opinion the first and the most important of these reasons was the growth and the development of the Jain and the Buddhistic religions; and as both these religions had opened the door of Renunciation to all the castes, the Path of Renunciation has gained ground even with the warrior (kṣatriya) class from the date when these two religions came into vogue. But although Buddha had in the beginning preached the inactive Path of Renunciation, yet, soon thereafter, there was a reform in the Buddhistic religion, consistent with the Karma-Yoga of the Gītā, by it being preached that Buddhistic ascetics should not remain in the woods, in solitude, like rhinoceroses, but should continually exert themselves for the propagation of religion and for public good (See Appendices); and history proves to us that as a result of this reform, societies of energetic Buddhistic ascetics reached Tibet in the North, Burma, China, and Japan in the East, Ceylon in the South, and Turkestan and the adjoining European countries like Greece, etc., in the West. The promulgators of the Jain and Buddhistic religions were born about 600 to 700 years before the Śalivāhana era, whereas Śaṅkarācārya was born about 600 year after that era. As the

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eminence of the societies of Buddhistic ascetics,, working ire the propagation of religion, was before the public eyes in the intervening period, there arose a kind of liking or respect for

the life of an ascetic in the public mind, long before Śaṁkarācārya was born; and although Śaṁkarācārya had refuted the Jain and the Buddhistic doctrines, yet, he gave a Vedic turn to the respect which reigned in the public mind for the life of an ascetic, and brought into existence Vedic ascetics- for the establishment of the Vedic religion, instead of the Buddhistic religion, who were as active and energetic as the Buddhist ascetics. It is true that these (Vedic) Saṁnyāsins led the lives of celibates, and used to wear clothes and carry a staff, which were the emblems of Renunciation; yet, they, like their spiritual preceptor, continued the work of establishing the Vedic religion. Seeing in this way, that Śaṁkarācārya. had established an institution similar to the Buddhist societies of ascetics, a doubt may even at that time have arisen as to- whether there was any difference between the teachings of Śrīmat Śaṁkarācārya and the Buddhistic teachings; and possibly Śaṁkarācārya has on that account said in his commentary on the Chāndogyopaniṣad that: "Buddhistic and Sāṁkhya asceticism is outside the purview of the Vedas and false; and as the Path of Renunciation enunciated by me is consistent with the Vedic religion, it is true" (Chān. Śāṁ. Bhā. 2. 23. 1), in order to clear that doubt. Whatever may be the case, there is no doubt that Asceticism was first introduced in the Kaliyuga by the Buddhist and Jain teachers. It is, however, quite clear from history that even the Buddhist ascetics later on performed Action for spreading religion or for public good and that the societies of Vedic ascetics, brought into existence

by Śaṁkarācārya for defeating the Buddhistic ascetics, also did not abandon Action altogether, but re-established the Vedic religion by their activities. But soon after that, our country began to be invaded by Mahomedans; and as the Kṣatriya. rulers, who were maintaining and protecting the country by their prowess against foreign invasions, and also simultaneously, the prowess of our country, began to die out during, the Mahomedan regime, the original one-sided opinion that the path of sitting idle, taking the name of God (saying 'Hari',

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'Hari') was the only proper way out of the two paths of Renunciation and Energism, must have become more and more acceptable to people for leading their worldly lives, as it was more in keeping with the particular external circumstances then prevailing. That state of things did not prevail before, is apparent from the following stanza adopted in the Śūdra Kamalākara from Viṣṇu-Purāṇa namely: –

apahāya nijaṁ karma kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇeti vādinaḥ ।  
te harer dveṣinaḥ pāpāḥ dharmārthaṁ janma yad  
dhareḥ ॥ [1]

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[1] I have not come across this stanza in the edition of the Viṣṇu-Purāṇa published in Bombay. Yet, as it has been adopted by an honest writer like Kamalākara Bhatta, I cannot say that it is without authority.

that is, "those who give up the duties which are theirs (according to their religion) and (simply) sit saying 'Hari', 'Hari,', are really enemies of Hari, and sinners; because, even Hari has taken birth for protecting religion". Really speaking, such persons do not belong either to the fold of Saṁnyāsins or of Karma-Yogins; because, they do not give up worldly affairs as a result of Spiritual Knowledge and intense apathy towards the world, as is done by Saṁnyāsins; nor do they desirelessly perform the duties which have fallen on them as a result of the injunctions of the Śāstras like Karma-Yogins, while they take part in worldly affairs. Therefore, these nominal Saṁnyāsins must be classified under a third category, which has not been mentioned in the Gītā. When people acquire this neutral mentality from any cause whatsoever, Religion cannot but ultimately be destroyed. This very state of things was responsible for the Parsi religion being thrown out of Iran, and the Vedic religion in India was also on the point of being "samūlaṁ ca vinaśyati" (i.e., "destroyed root and branch" ~Translator.) for the same reason; but the recrudescence of the Bhāgavata religion enunciated in the Gītā along with Vedānta after the fall of Buddhism, prevented this evil consequence from manifesting itself in our country. A few years before the Hindu dynasty of Daulatabad was destroyed by Mahomedans, Jñāneśvara Mahārāja, by our good fortune, gave "a native clothing" to the Bhagavadgītā, and brought

about an "over-flow of the knowledge of the Brahman" propounded by the Gītā into the Maharashtra provinces; and about the same time, other saints were preaching the Path of Devotion mentioned in the Gītā, in other provinces. As the illustrious teaching of the Gītā, which looked equably towards Mahomedans, Brahmins, and people of lower castes etc., and which was based on Knowledge, was being preached on all sides simultaneously, although in the shape of Devotion combined with Renunciation, not only was the danger of the Hindu religion being totally obliterated averted, but it began to gain some kind of influence on the bigoted Mahomedan religion, and to enter Mahomedan saints like Kabīra and others; and about the same time, Shahzada Dara, the elder brother of Aurangazeb, got the Upaniṣads translated into Urdu under his own supervision. If the Vedic Path of Devotion had been based on the pure ritualistic basis of Religious Faith, without being connected with Spiritual Knowledge, it is doubtful whether it would have retained this strength. But as this modern revival of the Bhāgavata religion took place during the Mahomedan régime, it also was more or less devotional, that is, one-sided; and the Karma-Yoga of the original Bhāgavata religion, which had once lost its independent importance, did not regain it; and the saints, philosophers and preceptors of this period began to say that Karma-Yoga was only a part of the Path of Devotion, instead of saying that it was a part of or a means in the Path of Renunciation. I think



that the only exception to this then prevalent opinion is the works of Śrī Samartha Rāmadāsa Svāmi; and anyone who wishes to see the true glory of the Path of Action, in pure and inspired Marathi language, must study the Dāsabodha of Śrī Samartha Rāmadāsa, and especially the latter portion of it. Śivāji Maharaj was blessed by the advice of Śrī Samartha Rāmadāsa; and later on, when the necessity of explaining the elements of the Karma-Yoga was being felt in the time of the Marathas, prose translations were made of the Mahābhārata, and not of the Śāṇḍilya-Sūtras or of the commentary of the Brahma-Sūtras, and they began to be studied in the form of "bakhars". These translations are still kept in the library at Tanjore. If this course had been carried on further without

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interruption, one-sided commentaries on the Gītā would have been left in the background, and the fact that the essence of Ethics and Morality in the Mahābhārata has been described in the Karma-Yoga of the Gītā, would certainly have been realised by people. But, by our misfortune, this revival of the Karma-Yoga was not long-lived.

This, however, is not the place to describe the religious history of India. My readers will have realised from the brief and succinct statement made above, that the religion propounded

in the Gītā contains some sort of life, brilliance, and power; and that this power was not lost in spite of the fact, that there was an intermediate fortuitous revival of the Saṁnyāsa religion. The root meaning of the word 'dharma' (morality) is "dhāraṇāt dharmah" (i.e., "Morality is that which upholds" ~Translator.); and it ordinarily falls into the two divisions, (1) 'dealing with life after death' (pāralaukika) and (2) 'dealing with worldly life' (vyāvahārika), or (1) the philosophy of Release (mokṣa-dharma), and (2) Ethics (nīti-dharma), as has been stated by me in the third chapter. Whether you take the Vedic religion, or Buddhism, or the Christian religion, the principal object of each of them is that the world should be maintained and that man should ultimately attain Release; and therefore, each of these religions deals to some extent or other with worldly notions of Right and Wrong, simultaneously with the philosophy of Release. Nay, we may even say that in ancient times, no difference used to be made between the philosophy of Release And worldly Morality; because, everyone then fully believed that in order to obtain a proper state after death, one's conduct in this world must also be pure. Not only was it so, but people used to believe that there is one and the same foundation for happiness after death as for happiness during life. But, as a result of the growth of the Material sciences, this belief has now lost ground in the Western countries, and people have begun (i) to consider whether Morality, that is, those rules by which the world is maintained, can or cannot be based on something other than

the philosophy of Release, and (ii) to base Sociology on a Materialistic, that is to say, a visible or perceptible foundation. But, how will all the needs of

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human beings be satisfied by that which is only perceptible? Even the class-denoting words, 'tree', 'man', etc., carry an, imperceptible idea. It is true that a mango-tree or a rose-tree are specific objects which are Visible; but the common noun 'tree' does not specify any visible or perceptible object; and all our activities are of the same nature. From this it follows, that in order that the idea of the Imperceptible should come into the mind, it is necessary to have some perceptible object before the eyes. But, it is equally true that the Perceptible is not the final stage, and that we cannot take a single step forward or complete even a single sentence without the support of the Imperceptible. Therefore, if one abandons the imperceptible idea of the Parabrahman in the shape of the Identity of the Ātman in all created beings, which is taken as a foundation for Ethics from the point of view of Metaphysics, it still becomes necessary to worship as a God, "the whole of mankind," which is a non-visible, that is, an imperceptible thing; and even ninety-nine per cent Materialistic philosophers have now begun to earnestly preach that we should include in mankind all the past and future generations, in order to satisfy the natural desire of human beings for immortality; and that

worshipping wholly, solely, and lovingly this magnified God,. or spending one's whole life in the service of it (mankind), or sacrificing one's selfish interests for it, is the highest duty of everybody in this world. This is the summary of the doctrines preached by the French philosopher Comte, and this religion has- been given by him the pretty name of "Religion of the entire mankind" or shortly "Religion of Humanity". [1] The same is the case with the modern German philosopher Nietzsche. This philosopher has, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, definitely proclaimed that "God is dead "; and he says that Metaphysics is all bosh. Nevertheless, after admitting the doctrines of Causality and of Re-incarnation from the Materialistic point of view, he has admitted in all his books,

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that performing such action as can be again performed by us birth after birth, and having such an arrangement of society as will lead to the creation in future of such a human animal as has all its mental faculties fully developed, and in a state of complete perfection, is the duty and the highest ideal of man

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[1] Comte has named his doctrine the "Religion of Humanity"; and the whole of it has been expounded in his work *A System of Positive Polity* (Eng. trans, in four volumes). This book contains a very clever discussion of the question how society can be established. and maintained even from the purely Materialistic point of view.

in this world. From this it will be seen, that even those, who do not admit the science of Metaphysics, have to take something or other as the highest ideal in dealing with the question of Morality and Immorality, and that such ideal is in one way 'imperceptible' (avyakta). Because, whether you ask people to worship the magnified deity in the shape of the 'whole of mankind', and to thereby bring about the benefit of the entire human kind, or you ask people to perform Action in such a way that at some time or other in the future a human being will be created which is in the most completely perfect state, both these ideals of the Materialistic moralists are invisible or imperceptible to the eyes of those for whom this preaching is intended. Although this preaching of Comte and Nietzsche may be contrary to a purely Intuitionist devotional religion like Christianity, which is devoid of philosophy, yet, all the above-mentioned Materialistic- ideals can without any difficulty be included in the highest ideals of the science of Morality and Immorality, or of Ethics, based on the foundation of (i) the ideal of the Realisation of the identity of the Ātman in all created beings, or of (ii) the state of perfection of the Karma-Yogin Sthitaprajña (one whose Reason has been steadied by the practice of Karma-Yoga); and therefore, one need not entertain the fear that this- Materialistic philosophy will ever give a set-back to the Vedic religion, which is replete with the Knowledge of the Absolute Self. If it is necessary to look upon the highest ideal as imperceptible, why should it be restricted to "mankind"?; and even if the 'State of Perfection' is to be

considered as the highest ideal, how is that ideal better than the Materialistic ideal which is common both to man and animal? These are the questions which now face us; and when one attempts to answer these questions, one has ultimately to take shelter in the one, indescribable, highest Element, which is the foundation of the entire moveable and

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immoveable creation from the Metaphysical point of view. The Material sciences have had an unprecedented growth in modern times, and our knowledge of the visible world is a hundred times more extensive than before; and that Eastern nation which will fail to acquire the knowledge of those sciences, following the principle of 'measure for measure', will undoubtedly fail to resist the onslaught of new civilised Western countries. But, however much the Material sciences may grow, the inherent tendency of the human mind to try to understand the Root Cause of the universe, will never be fully satisfied by Materialistic explanations. The knowledge of the perceptible world by itself does not account for everything; and even evolutionists like Spencer frankly admit that there must be some imperceptible Substance at the root of the Name-d and Form-ed visible world. But, they say that as it is impossible to understand the characteristic features of this permanent and eternal Substance, no science can be based on the foundation of such a Substance. The German philosopher

Kant also admits the incognoscibility of the imperceptible Substance at the root of the creation; yet, he is of opinion that the science of Ethics must be based on this incognoscible Substance. Schopenhauer goes further, and maintains that this imperceptible Substance is of the nature of Desire, and the English Moralist Green maintains that this Substance at the root of the creation has been partially incarnated in the human body in the shape of the Ātman; and as for the Gītā, it clearly says that, "mamaivāṁśo jīvaloke jīvabhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ" (Gī. 15.7), (i.e., "parts of My eternal essence take the form of Life, in the world of Life (the world of Action)" ~Translator.). The writers of the Upaniṣads say that this imperceptible Substance at the root of the universe, is permanent, one, immortal, independent, and of the form of the Ātman, and that nothing more can be said about it; and it is doubtful whether human knowledge will ever go beyond this conclusion; because, as the imperceptible Substance at the root of the world is invisible to the organs, that is, necessarily quality less, this quality less Substance cannot be described by any words which denote a quality, or an object, or an Action; and that is why it is called 'ajñeya' (unknowable). But though this knowledge, which we

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acquire of the imperceptible World-Substance, cannot be described to a greater extent in words, and though it may be small to all appearances, yet, as it is the sum and substance of

all human knowledge, the exposition of worldly Ethics must be made by reference to it; and it will be apparent from the exposition made in the Gītā that there cannot be the slightest difficulty in the way of doing so properly. In order to properly understand how the thousands of activities in the world should be carried on – for instance, how commerce should be carried on, how wars should be fought out, what medicine should be given to a sick person and in what circumstances, or how one should measure the distances of the Sun and the Moon etc. – one will always need the knowledge of the Name-d and Form-ed visible world; and in order to carry on this worldly activity more and more skillfully, one must undoubtedly study the Material sciences deeper and deeper. But that is not the subject-matter of the Gītā. The chief object of the Gītā is to explain which is the most excellent state of man from the Metaphysical point of view, and to decide the fundamental principles of Ethics as regards the Doable and the Not-Doable on that basis. I have shown in the previous chapters that (i) although the Materialistic view is indifferent about Release which is the Metaphysical ideal, yet, that view is insufficient-even for definitely deciding the elementary principles of Ethics; that (ii) that point of view cannot satisfactorily answer the moot questions of Freedom of Will, or the permanence of ethical principles, or the inherent desire in the human mind to attain immortality; and that (iii) one has ultimately to necessarily enter into the question of the Ātman and the Non-Ātman. But the province of Metaphysics does- not end there.



And it must be borne in mind that the Materialistic theory of Happiness does not explain what the most perfect- state of a human being is, as satisfactorily as it is explained by the science of Metaphysics, since the fundamental basis of Righteous Action (sadācaraṇa) is the change,, which takes place in the character or the nature of a man, as a result of the particular Peace (śānti) which is acquired by the human Ātman by the continual worship and direct Realisation of that Immortal Substance which is at the root of the world.

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Because, pure bodily pleasures are the ideal only of animals, and they can never fully satisfy the intelligence of an intelligent human being; and, it has already been fully explained in previous chapters, that Happiness and Unhappiness are transient, and that Duty is permanent. Looking at the matter from this point of view, it will be seen that (i) this most advanced religion of the Gītā will never be found inferior to the purely Materialistic philosophy, which considers human actions from the point of view that man is only a superior kind of animal, since the religion relating to the life after death and the Ethics preached in the Gītā, have both been explained with reference to the permanent and immortal World-Substance; that (ii) this our Gītā religion is a permanent, undauntable religion; and that (iii) the Blessed Lord has not left the necessity for Hindus to rely on any other book, or religion, or

opinion in this matter. Nay, the words "abhayaṁ vai prāpto'si", i.e., "Now, you have nothing to fear" (Br. k 2. 4), which were addressed by Yājñavalkya to Janaka, after the entire Knowledge of the Brahman had been explained to him (Janaka), may literally and in several meanings, be applied to the religion of the Gītā.

The religion of the Gītā, which is a combination of Spiritual Knowledge, Devotion, and Action, which is in all respects undaunted and comprehensive, and is further perfectly equable, that is, which does not maintain any distinction between classes, castes, countries, or any other distinction, but gives Release to everyone in the same measure, and at the same time shows proper forbearance towards other religions, is thus seen to be the sweetest and immortal fruit of the tree of the Vedic Religion. In the Vedic Religion, higher importance was given in the beginning principally to the sacrifice of wealth or of animals, that is to say, principally to Action in the shape of ritual; but, when the Knowledge expounded in the Upaniṣads taught later on that this ritualistic religion of the Śrutis was inferior, Sāṁkhya philosophy came into existence out of it. But as this Knowledge was unintelligible to ordinary people, and as it was specially inclined towards Abandonment of Action, it was not possible for ordinary people

to be satisfied merely by the religion of the Upaniṣads, or by the unification of the Upaniṣads and the Sāṃkhya philosophy in the Smṛtis. Therefore, the Gītā religion fuses the Knowledge of the Brahman contained in the Upaniṣads, which is cognoscible only to the Intelligence, with the 'king of mysticisms' (rāja-guhya) of the worship of the Perceptible which is accessible to Love, and consistently with the ancient tradition of ritualistic religion, it proclaims to everybody, though nominally to Arjuna, that, "perform lifelong your several worldly duties according to your respective positions in life, desirelessly, for the universal good, with a Self-Identifying vision, and enthusiastically, and thereby perpetually worship 'the deity in the shape of the Paramātmā (the Highest Ātman), Which is Eternal, and Which uniformly pervades the Body of all created things as also the Cosmos; because, therein lies your happiness in this world and in the next"; and on that account, the mutual conflict between Action, Spiritual Knowledge (Jñāna), and Love (Devotion) is done away with, and the single Gītā religion, which preaches that the whole of one's life should be turned into a Sacrifice (Yajña), contains the essence of the entire Vedic religion. When hundreds of energetic noble souls and active persons were busy with the benefit of all created things, because they looked upon that as their duty, as a result of their having Realised this eternal religion, this country was blessed with the favour of the Parameśvara, and reached the height not only of Knowledge

'but also of prosperity; and it need not be said in so many words, that when this ancient religion, which is beneficial in this life and in the next, lost following in our country, it (our country) reached its present fallen state. I, therefore, now pray to the Parameśvara, at the end of this book, that there should come to birth again in this our country such noble and pure men as will worship the Parameśvara according to this equable and brilliant religion of the Gītā, which harmonises Devotion, Spiritual Knowledge, and Energism; and I end this Exposition of the Mystic Import (rahasya) of the Gītā by addressing to my readers the following hymn, with a

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prayer that if there is any omission or excess in this book, they should rectify such mistakes with an Equable vision: –

samānī va ākūtiḥ samānā hṛdayāni vaḥ ।

samānam astu vo mano yathā vaḥ susahāsati ।

yathā vaḥ susahāsati ॥ [1]

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[1] This hymn has come at the end of the R̥g-Veda Saṁhitā. This is a speech addressed to people assembled in a sacrificial paṇḍal. It means: "May your opinions be uniform; may your hearts be uniform, may you all be of the same mind; thereby you will acquire the strength of unity", 'asati' is the Vedic form of 'asti' (i.e., 'may it be' ~Translator.). The words "yathā vaḥ susahāsati" have been- expressed twice, in order to show that the book has come to an end.

OM-TAT-SAT-BRAHMĀRPAṆAM-ASTU

that is,

(OM-TAT-SAT; this is dedicated to the Brahman.)

—:O:—

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## APPENDIX

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# APPENDIX.

## (PARÍŚIṢṬA-PRAKARAṆA)

### AN EXTERNAL EXAMINATION OF THE BHAGAVAD-GĪTĀ.

aviditvā ṛṣim chando daivataṁ yogam eva ca ।

yo 'dhyāpayej japed vāpi pāpīyaṁ jāyate tu saḥ ॥ [1]

(SMṚTI).

I have in the previous chapters shown how Śrī Kṛṣṇa induced Arjuna to fight, after having proved to him with the help of the

- 
- [1] "That man who teaches or recites any incantation (mantra) without knowing the Ṛṣi, metre, (chanda), deity (devata), and purpose (viniyoga) of it, commits a sin". This is a statement from some Smṛti text, but I cannot find out from which text. But the root of it is in the Ārṣeya Brāhmaṇa Śruti text (Ārṣeya. 1). That is, as follows: – "yo ha vā aviditārṣeyacchandodaivatabrāhmaṇena mantreṇa yājayati vā 'dhyāpayati vā sthāṇuṁ varcchati gartaṁ vā pratipadyate". The Ṛṣi, metre, etc., of any incantation are its external aspects; and one should not recite the incantation unless one knows these aspects. The same rule must be applied to a book like the Gītā.

Vedānta-Śāstra that (i) the Karma-Yoga was more meritorious; that (ii) in the Karma-Yoga, Reason was the important factor; that (iii) Release was obtained by performing Actions according to one's own status in life with a Reason which had become Equable as a result of the Realisation of the Identity of the Brahman and the Ātman or by the worship of the Parameśvara; and that (iv) nothing else is necessary for obtaining Release, and that He did this in order to correct Arjuna, who, after having first visualised the actual form of the terrible destruction of the clan and of the community which was sure to arise on account of the Bhārātī war, was on the point of renouncing his duties as a soldier, and taking up the life of an ascetic. When I have in this way defined the true import of the Gītā, it is easy to meet the objections, which have been raised, to the effect that 'there is no reason to include the Gītā in the Mahābhārata', etc., as a result of the misunderstanding that the Gītā is a book which deals

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purely with. Vedānta and supports Inaction. Because, just as Śrī-Kṛṣṇa had compelled Arjuna to abstain from murdering Yudhiṣṭhira, by explaining to him the difference between Truth (satya) and Falsehood (anṛta) in the Karṇaparva, so also was the advice given in the Gītā necessary to induce Arjuna to fight; and considering the matter even from the literary point of view, it is clear that the exposition of the principles of

Morality and Immorality in worldly life, or of the Doable and the Not-Doable, have been ultimately mentioned in the Gītā, as- it was necessary to mention in some place or other the fundamental principles underlying many similar incidents in various places in the Mahābhārata. In the Vanaparva, in the conversation between the Hunter (vyādha) and the Brahmin, the Hunter has justified why he carries on the trade of selling: flesh on the authority of Vedānta; and in the conversation between Tulādhāra and Jājali in the Śāntiparva, Tulādhāra has justified his profession of a merchant in a similar way (Vana. 206 – 215; and Śān. 260 – 263). But this justification refers only to those respective professions. In the same way, though there are dissertations in several places in the Mahābhārata on the questions of Non-Violence, Truth, etc., yet, as they also are one-sided, that is to say, are made only with reference to the subject-matter in question, these dissertations cannot be said to be the principal part of the Mahābhārata ; nor do these one-sided dissertations explain whether or not people should take as illustrations the lives of those great persons like Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍavas, for describing whose magnificent deeds, the Mahābhārata was written by Vyāsa,. and should act accordingly. If worldly life is fruitless, and if it is the better course to take up the life of an ascetic sometime or other, one is faced with the questions why Śrī Kṛṣṇa or the Pāṇḍavas should have taken part in these useless activities. as also why Vyāsa should have laboured for three years (Ma, Bhā. Ā. 62.52), and written a book of nearly a hundred thousand



verses for glorifying those activities for the general good, with whatever motive they might have taken part in those activities. These questions are not satisfactorily solved by saying that the duties prescribed for the various castes and the different stages of life are for the purification of the Mind;

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because, acting according to one's duties, or the other activities of the world, occupy in any case only an inferior place from the point of view of the School of Renunciation. Therefore, it was necessary to answer the above-mentioned objections, which cut like an axe at the roots (mūle kuṭhāraḥ) of the conduct of those noble souls, whose lives had been described in the Mahābhārata, and to explain in detail in some place or other in the Mahābhārata whether or not a man should take part in worldly affairs, and if so, how a man should perform his various duties in worldly life without obstructing his own Release by such Action. But it would not have been proper to deal with this subject-matter in the Nalopākhyāna, Rāmopākhyāna, and other subsidiary chapters in the Mahābhārata; because, in that case, such an exposition would have been considered subsidiary like those subsidiary chapters. Also, if the Gītā had been crammed into the exposition of the various subjects which had been dealt with in the Vanaparva and the Śāntiparva, it would certainly have lost its importance; and that is why this independent philosophy of

the Doable and the Not-Doable has been dealt with, with all the arguments in support of it, at the psychological moment when the Udyogaparva was over, and the Bhārati war, the most important part of the Mahābhārata, was about to start, by raising to that war an objection, which was seemingly unconquerable from the point of view of Morality. In short, even if we keep aside for the time being the traditional story that Śrī Kṛṣṇa preached the Gītā to Arjuna at the commencement of the war, and consider the matter from the point of view that the Gītā is a Vedic epic included in the Mahābhārata for explaining Morality and Immorality, we will see that the place which has been chosen in the Bhārata for the preaching of the Gītā is such as is even poetically a most proper one for impressing the importance of the Gītā on the minds of people. When the propriety of the subject-matter of the Gītā, as also of the place where it has been put in the Mahābhārata has been explained in this way, the objection that there was no necessity to preach this Spiritual Knowledge on the battle-field, and that the text must have been interpolated into the Mahābhārata at a later date, or the question whether ten stanzas or one

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hundred stanzas are the important stanzas in the Bhagavadgītā , no longer remain; because, when it was once decided that certain subjects must for certain reasons be included in certain

places in the Mahābhārata, in order to explain Morality, and to justify the Bhārata being expanded into the Mahābhārata, the writer of the Mahābhārata did not care how much space was taken up in fully expounding those subject-matters, as will be seen from the other chapters of the Mahābhārata. Yet, as it is necessary to consider what amount of substance there is in the various other theories which have been advanced as regards the external examination of the Gītā, and as I have now occasion to do, so, I have in the following seven parts of this chapter, dealt seriatim with seven of these subjects, namely, (1) the Gītā and the Mahābhārata, (2) the Gītā and the Upaniṣads, (3) the Gītā and the Brahma-Sūtras, (4) the rise of the Bhāgavata religion and the Gītā, (5) the time or date of the Gītā as it now exists, (6) the Gītā and the Buddhistic literature, and (7) the Gītā and the Christian Bible. I must, however, make it clear to start with, that, as external critics examine the Mahābhārata, the Gītā, the Brahma-Sūtras, the Upaniṣads etc., merely as literature, that is, from the worldly and historical point of view, I also propose to deal with the above-mentioned subjects from the same points of view.

## **PART I.— THE GĪTĀ AND THE MAHĀBHĀRATA.**

The statement made by me above that the Gītā, which supports Action, has been included in the Mahābhārata for sufficient reasons, and at a proper place, for morally justifying the lives of great persons like Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and that it must have been a part of the Mahābhārata, is fully confirmed if one considers the construction of these two books. But before entering into such a comparison, it is necessary to briefly consider the present form of these two books. Śrīmat Śaṅkarācārya has stated at the very outset in his commentary on the Gītā, that there are 700 stanzas in the Gītā; and we find the same number of stanzas in all the available editions of the book. Out of these 700 stanzas, there is one stanza of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, 40 of Sañjaya, 84 of Arjuna, and 575 of the Blessed Lord. But the Gītā-Māhātmya (Eminence of the

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Gītā) of five and a half stanzas at the commencement of that chapter of the Bhīṣmaparva, which comes after the eighteen chapters of the Gītā are over, that is, of the 43rd chapter of the Bhīṣmaparva, in the edition of the Mahābhārata published at the Ganpat Krishnaji Press at Bombay, it is stated that:—

ṣaṭśatāni savimśāni ślokanām prāha keśavaḥ ।  
arjunaḥ saptapañcāśat saptaśaṣṭim tu sañjayaḥ ।  
dhṛtarāṣṭraḥ ślokaṁ ekaṁ gītāyā mānam ucyate ॥

that is: "In the Gītā, there are 620 stanzas of Keśava, 57 of Arjuna, 67 of Sañjaya, and 1 of Dhṛtarāṣṭra", in all 745 stanzas. These stanzas are to be found in the edition of the Mahābhārata printed by Mr. Krishnacharya, according to the reading adopted in the Madras Presidency; but we do not find them in the edition of the Mahābhārata printed in Calcutta; and Nīlakaṇṭha, who has written a commentary on the Bhārata, has said with reference to these five and a half verses, that "gauḍaiḥ na paṭhyante" (i.e., "they are not to be found in the Gauda, that is, Bengali, reading" ~Translator.). It would, therefore, appear that these five and a half stanzas have been interpolated into the Mahābhārata; but even if these five and a half stanzas are considered an interpolation, yet, it is not possible to say how these 45 stanzas, which are- in excess of the stanzas of the Gītā which are now available. were obtained by anybody. As the Mahābhārata is a very extensive treatise, it is possible to interpolate stanzas into it, or to take away existing stanzas; but the same is not the case with the Gītā. The Gītā was a text in daily recital, and there were formerly many people and there are still some people, who can repeat the whole of the Gītā by heart in the same way as the Vedas. We do not come across many variant readings in the present Gītā, and that is why the few variant readings which exist are well-known to the commentators. Nay, it may even be said that the Gītā has been made to contain exactly 700 stanzas, in order that nobody should be in a position to add to or take away from that number; then, how have 45 stanzas – and

those too of the Blessed Lord – been included in the Gītā in the Bombay and the Madras editions of the Mahābhārata? The total number of stanzas

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attributed to Sañjaya and Arjuna is the same according to this arrangement, as in the present available editions of the Gītā, namely, one hundred and twenty-four; and as there is a likelihood of ten other stanzas being attributed to Sañjaya, on account of difference of opinion, just as the seventeen stanzas "paśyāmi devān", etc., in the eleventh chapter (11.15 – 31) have been so attributed, one can say that although the total of the stanzas attributed to Sañjaya and Arjuna may be the same, there might have been a difference in counting the respective stanzas attributed to Arjuna and Sañjaya. But, one cannot account for the 45 additional stanzas, that is, for 630, instead of the now available 575 stanzas attributed to the Blessed Lord. If it is said that a praise (stotra) or 'a description for purposes of meditation' (dhyāna) of the Gītā or some other similar subject has been included in this chapter, then, not only is such subject-matter not to be found in the Bombay edition of the Bhārata, but that edition has a Gītā of only 700 stanzas. Therefore, there is no alternative except to take as authoritative the present Gītā of 700 stanzas. This disposes of the Gītā. But if one considers the Mahābhārata, the difference in the matter of the Gītā is as nothing. There is a statement in

the Mahābhārata itself that it contains a hundred thousand stanzas; but we do not come across that number of stanzas in the now available editions of the Mahābhārata, and the number of chapters in the various Parvas is also not according to the index given in the beginning of the Bhārata, as has been clearly proved by Rao Bahadur Chintamanrao Vaidya in his criticism on the Bhārata. In these circumstances, one has to take in hand only certain definite editions of these two treatises for purpose of comparison; and therefore, I have compared them by taking as authoritative the Gītā of 700 stanzas, which was accepted as authoritative by Śrīmat Śaṅkarācārya, and the edition of the Mahābhārata printed in Calcutta by Babu Pratapchandra Roy; and the references in this book to the stanzas quoted from the Mahābhārata are according to the above-mentioned edition of the Mahābhārata printed at Calcutta. If these verses have to be referred to in the editions printed by Krishnacharya according to the Bombay or Madras readings, they will be

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found either in advance of or subsequent to the place mentioned by me.

If one compares the Gītā of 700 stanzas and the edition of the Mahābhārata printed by Babu Pratapchandra Roy at Calcutta,

it will firstly be seen that it is stated in many places in the Mahābhārata itself that the Bhagavadgītā is a part of the Mahābhārata. The first of these references is in the index given in the second chapter of the Ādiparva. There is first a statement, where the various Parvas have been described, that "pūrvoktaṁ bhagavadgītāparva bhīṣmavadhas tataḥ" (Ma. Bhā. Ā. 2. 69); and afterwards in enumerating the chapters and the stanzas in the 18 parvas, there is a clear reference to the Bhagavadgītā in the description of Bhīṣmaparva as: –

kaśmalaṁ yatra pārthasya vāsudevo mahāmatih |  
mohajaṁ nāśayāmāsa hetubhir mokṣadarśibhiḥ ||

that is, "in which treatise, Vāsudeva has removed the dejection of Arjuna, due to Ignorance, by showing him the Path which leads to Release". In the same way, in the first chapter of the Ādiparva, where Dhṛtarāṣṭra is explaining his growing despair regarding the success of Duryodhana and others, starting each stanza with the words "yadā śrauṣaṁ", it is stated that "when Arjuna became confused, and Kṛṣṇa showed to him His Cosmic Form, I despaired of victory" (Ma. Bhā. Ā. 1.179). After these three references in the Ādiparva, it again became necessary to refer to the Gītā in describing the Nārāyaṇīya religion at the end of the Śāntiparva. The four names Nārāyaṇīya, Sātvata, Ekāntika, and Bhāgavata are synonymous; and this chapter explains the devotional energistic path preached by Ṛṣi Nārāyaṇa or by the Blessed Lord to Nārada in the Śvetadvīpa. (Śān. 334. 351). The underlying principle of this Bhāgavata



religion is, that by worshipping Vasudeva in solitude, and by carrying on one's duties in the world according to one's religion, one attains Release; and I have already shown in previous chapters that it has also been maintained in the Bhagavadgītā, that the Karma-Yoga is superior to the Path of Renunciation. In describing the tradition of this Nārāyaṇīya doctrine, Vaiśampāyana says to Janamejaya that this doctrine had been

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preached to Nārada by Nārāyaṇa Himself, and that the same-doctrine has been "kathito HARIGĪTĀSU samāsavidhi kalpataḥ" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 346. 10), i.e., "mentioned in the Harigītā or the Bhagavadgītā". It is also stated later on in the eighth stanza of the 348th chapter, that:

samupoḍhe śvanīkeṣu kurupāṇḍavayor mṛdhe ।

arjune vīmanaske ca gītā bhagavatā svayam ॥

that is, "these rites of the solitudinal (ekāntika) Nārāyaṇīya doctrine, were taught by the Blessed Lord to the dejected Arjuna on the occasion of the war between the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas"; and the tradition of the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine in that war has been given there; and it is again stated that this path, as also the path of ascetics, that is, the Path of Renunciation, have both been mentioned in the HARIGĪTĀ

(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 348. 53). Besides these six references in the Ādiparva and the Śāntiparva, there is also one more reference to the Bhagavadgītā in the Anugītā parva included in the Aśvamedhaparva. Some days after the Bhārātī war was over, and Yudhiṣṭhira had been placed on the throne, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were one day sitting together, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa had said to Arjuna: "It is no more necessary for me to stay here; I wish to go to Dvārakā", Arjuna said to Him, that he had forgotten what Śrī Kṛṣṇa had preached at the commencement of the war, and requested Him to preach the same thing again (Aśva. 16). Then, to satisfy this request, Śrī Kṛṣṇa preached the Anugītā to Arjuna before going to Dvārakā. In the beginning of this Anugītā, the Blessed Lord has Himself said that: "It is your misfortune that you have forgotten the advice which I gave to you in the commencement of the war. It is impossible for Me to repeat the same advice in the same way again, and therefore I will tell you instead something else" (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. Anugītā 16.9 – 13); and some of the chapters of the Anugītā are similar to those of the Gītā. The Gītā has thus been referred to SEVEN times in the Mahābhārata, including this reference. Therefore, it follows from the intrinsic evidence in the Mahābhārata itself, that the Bhagavadgītā is a part of the present Mahābhārata.

But, as the course of doubts is uncontrolled, some persons are not satisfied even by these seven references, and they

inquire why it may not be said that these references were themselves also interpolated into the Mahābhārata afterwards; and thus their doubt as to whether or not the Gītā was a part of the Mahābhārata still remains. This doubt has its origin in the idea that the Gītā deals only with the Knowledge of the Brahman. But, as I have already shown that this idea itself is incorrect, this doubt should, strictly speaking, not remain. Nevertheless, instead of depending solely on this evidence, I shall now show, by reference to other evidence also, that this doubt is unfounded. When there is a doubt whether or not two works were written by one and the same author, literary critics consider two matters in the first place, namely, SIMILARITY OF DICTION and SIMILARITY OF MEANING. Out of these, similarity of diction includes not only the words themselves, but also the composition. Considering the matter from this point of view, one must see to what extent the diction of the Gītā is similar to the diction of the Mahābhārata. But as the Mahābhārata is a very extensive work, the diction in it varies according to the occasion. For instance, if one refers to the description of the fight between Karṇa and Arjuna in the Karṇaparva, it will be seen that the diction in this parva is different from the diction of the other parts of the Mahābhārata. Therefore, it is difficult to definitely say whether or not the language of the Gītā is similar to the language of the Mahābhārata. But if one considers the matter in a general way,

then, as Mr. Kashinath Trimbak Telang [1] says, the language and the metrical arrangement of the Gītā is archaic (arm) or ancient. For instance, Kashinathpant has shown that the meanings in which the words 'anta' (Gī. 2.16), 'bhāṣā' (Gī. 2.54), 'Brahma' (= prakṛti. Gī. 14.3), 'Yoga' (= Karma-Yoga), and the consonant 'ha' used for completing the meter (Gī. 2.9) etc. have been used

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in the Gītā, do not appear to have been used in the same sense in the poems of Kālidāsa etc.; and we come across the form "namaskṛtvā" in stanza 11.35, and a compound like "satya ahaṁ" in stanza 11.45, though as variant readings, which are contrary to the grammar of Pāṇinī. Also in the phrase "senānīnām ahaṁ skandaḥ" (Gī. 10. 24), the sixth case (possessive) form "senānīnām" is not correct according to Pāṇinī. The late Mr. Telang has not given detailed illustrations of archaic metrical construction. But I think that he has called the metrical arrangement of the Gītā 'archaic' (arm) with special reference to the 36 stanzas in the eleventh chapter,

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[1] The translation of the Bhagavadgītā made by the late Mr. Kashinath Trimbak Telang, has been published in the Sacred Books of the East Series Vol. VIII, edited by Prof. Max Müller. To this translation, a critical dissertation has been added by him by way of introduction in the English language. The references made to- the opinions of the late Mr. Telang in this Appendix are (with one exception) to this introduction.

which contain the description of the Cosmic Form (Gī. 11.15 – 50). In each stanza, out of these 36, there are eleven letters to a line. But there is no meter which is consistently followed, and we find that if one line is in the *indravajrā* meter, the second is in the *upendravajrā*, the third in the *śālinī*, and the fourth one in a different meter altogether; and there are thus eleven different meters to be found in these 36 verses, that is, 144 lines. Nevertheless, each line contains only eleven letters, and the rule seems to be followed that the first, fourth, eighth and the last two letters are long (*guru*) and the sixth one is usually short (*laghu*); and therefore, an inference may be drawn that these stanzas have been written in the *triṣṭupa* metre used in the *Ṛg-Veda* or in the *Upaniṣads*. We do not come across odd-numbered meters of eleven letters to a line like this in any poem of *Kālidāsa*. In the *Śākuntala*, the stanza: "amī vedim̐ paritaḥ kṛptadhiṣṇyāḥ" is in this meter. But *Kālidāsa* himself has described this meter as '*Ṛk.-chanda*' that is, a meter used in the *Ṛg-Veda*. From this it is clear that the *Gītā* was written when archaic meters were in vogue. We come across similar archaic words and "Vedic metres in other places in the *Mahābhārata*. But another convincing proof of the similarity of diction of the two books is the similar stanzas to be found in the *Mahābhārata* and in the *Gītā*. Examining all these stanzas in the *Mahābhārata* and ascertaining correctly how many of them are to be found in the *Gītā* is a very difficult task. Yet, in reading the *Mahābhārata*, I found stanzas in it

which are either word for word similar to the stanzas in the Gītā, or are similar but with slight verbal alterations, and

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these are not a few in number. This easily solves the question of the similarity of language or diction. We find the following stanzas or semi-stanzas either word for word the same or with only one or two words different in the Gītā and in the Mahābhārata (Calcutta edition): –

GĪTĀ (Chapter. Sloka), Sloka	MAHĀBHĀRATA (Parva. Chapter. Sloka).
1.9, nānā śāstra praharaṇā etc. (semi-stanza)	Bhīṣma-parva 51.4. As in the etc. Gītā, Duryodhana is again describing his army to Droṇācārya.
1.10, aparyāptaṁ etc. (whole stanza)	Bhīṣma. 51. 6.
1.12 – 19, (Eight stanzas)	Bhīṣma. 51. 22 – 29. The stanzas- are just the same as in the Gītā, with slight, verbal alterations.

1.45, aho bata mahat pāpaṁ etc. (whole stanza)	Droṇa. 197.50. Same as in the Gītā, with slight verbal alterations.
2.19, ubhau tau na vijānītaḥ etc. (semi-stanza)	Śānti. 224.14. In the Bali-vāsava-saṁvāda, with verbal alterations; and in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad (2.18).
2.28, avyaktādīni bhūtāni etc. (whole stanza)	Strī. 2.6; 9.11. Instead of 'avyakta', the word. 'abhāva' is used; rest is the same.
2.31, dharmyād dhi yuddhāc chreyo etc. (semi-stanza)	Bhīṣma. 124. 36. Bhīṣma says the same words to Karṇa.
2.32, yad dṛcchayā etc. (whole stanza)	Karṇa. 57.2. Instead of 'Pārtha', the word 'Karṇa' is used in the conversation between Duryodhana and Karṇa.

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2.46, yāvān artha udapāne etc. (whole stanza)	Udyoga. 45.26. Has appeared with slight verbal alterations in the Sanatsujātīya chapter.
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2.59, viṣayā vinivartante etc. (whole stanza)	Śānti. 204.16. Has appeared word for word in the conversation between Manu and Bṛhaspati.
2.67, indriyāṇāṃ hi caratām etc. (whole stanza)	Vana. 210.26. Has appeared with slight verbal alterations in the conversation between the Brahmin and the Hunter; and there is also the 'rūpaka' (simile) of the chariot in the earlier portion.
2.70, āpūryamāṇam acalapraṭiṣṭham etc. (whole stanza)	Śānti. 250.9. Has appeared word for word in the Śukānupraśna.
3.42, indriyāṇi parāṇy āhuḥ etc. (whole stanza)	Śānti. 245.3 and 247.2. Has appeared with slight verbal alterations twice in the Śukānupraśna; but this stanza is originally from the Kaṭhōpaniṣad (Kaṭha. 3.10).
4.7, yadā yadā hi dharmasya etc. (semi-stanza)	Vana. 189.27. Has appeared word for word in the Mārkaṇḍeyapraśna.
4 31, nāyaṃ loko 'stya	Śānti. 267.40. Has appeared



yajñasya etc. (semi-stanza)	in the Gokāpiliya chapter, and the whole chapter deals with the Yajña.
4. 40, nāyaṁ loko 'sti na paro etc. (semi-stanza)	Vana. 199. 110. Has appeared word for word in the Mārkaṇḍeya-samasyā-parva

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5.5, yat sāmkyaiḥ prāpyate sthānaṁ etc. (whole stanza)	Śānti. 305.19 and 316.4. Has appeared in these two places with slight verbal alterations in the conversation between Vaśiṣṭha and Karāla and between Yājñavalkya and Janaka, respectively.
5.18, vidyā vinaya saṁpanne etc. (whole stanza)	Śānti. 238.19. Has appeared word for word in the Śukānupraśna.
6.5, ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhuḥ etc. (semi-stanza of the next stanza)	Udyoga. 33.63, 64. Has appeared word for word and half in the Viduranīti.
6.29, sarvabhūtaśamam	Śānti. 238. 21. In the

ātmānaṁ etc. (semi-stanza)	Śukānupraśna, and also in the Manu-Smṛti (Manu.12.91), Īśāvāsyopaniṣad (Īśā. 6) and literally in the Kaivalyopaniṣad (Kai. 1.10).
6.44, jijñāsur api yogasya etc. (semi-stanza)	Śānti. 235. 7. Has appeared with slight verbal alterations in the Śukānupraśna.
8.17, sahasra yuga paryantam etc. This stanza has been given in the Gītā without first explaining what 'yuga' means.	Śānti. 231.31. Has appeared literally in the Śukānupraśna; and the method of computation of a 'yuga' has also been mentioned previously. This has appeared with slight verbal alterations also in the Manu-Smṛti (Manu. 1.73).
8. 20, yah sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu etc. (semi-stanza)	Śānti. 339. 23. Has appeared twice with slight verbal alterations in the Nārāyaṇīya-dharma.

9.32, striyo vaiśyas tathā etc. (whole stanza and half of the next stanza)	Aśva. 19. 61 and 62. These verses have appeared with' slight verbal alterations in the Anugītā.
13.13, sarvataḥ pāṇipādaṁ (whole stanza)	Śānti. 238. 29. and Aśva. 19. 49. This stanza has appeared, word for word in the Śukānupraśna and in the Anugītā as also in other places. It is originally from the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad (Śve. 3.16).
13.30, yada bhūta pṛthag bhāvaṁ etc. (whole stanza)	Śānti. 17. 23. The same words have been addressed by Yudhiṣṭhira to Arjuna.
14.18, ūrdhvaṁ gacchanti sattvasthā etc. (whole stanza)	Aśva. 39. 10 This stanza has appeared word for word in the conversation between the disciple and the preceptor in the Anugītā.
16.21, trividhaṁ narakasy edam (whole stanza)	Udyoga. 32.70. Has appeared etc. word for word in the Viduranīti,
17.3, śraddhāmaya yaṁ	Śānti. 263. 17. Has appeared

puruṣaḥ etc., (semi-stanza)	in the portion on Devotion in the conversation between Tulādhāra and Jājali.
18.14, adhiṣṭhānaṁ tathā kartā etc., (whole stanza)	Śānti. 347. 87. Has appeared word for word in the Nārāyaṇīya-dharma.

In this way, it is seen that 27 whole stanzas and 12 semi-stanzas appear sometimes word for word the same, and sometimes with slight verbal differences both in the Mahābhārata and in the Gītā; and if a more thorough examination is made, there is a likelihood that one may come across many

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other stanzas and semi-stanzas which are common to both. If one wishes to see in how many places there are common combinations of two words or three words, or of quarter portions of a stanza, which are common to the Mahābhārata and to the Gītā, the above-mentioned list will have to be considerably increased" [1]. But, if we leave aside the similarity

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[1] If one considers the whole of the Mahābhārata from this point of view, there will be at least a hundred similar portions of stanzas; but I will mention only a few out of them here: kiṁ bhogair jīvitena vā (Gī. 1.32);

of words, and consider merely the question of similarity of stanzas in the above list, we cannot but say that the Mahābhārata and the Gītā must, have been written by the same hand. Considering the matter with reference to the different chapters, we see that out of the above-mentioned 33 stanzas, 1 comes in the Mārkaṇḍeya-praśna, J in the Mārkaṇḍeya-samasyā, 1 in the Brahmin-Hunter conversation, 2 in the Viduranīti, 1 in the Sanatsujātīya, 1 in the Manu-Bṛhaspati conversation, 6-J- in the Śukānu-praśna, 1 the Tulādhāra-Jājali conversation, 1 in the Vaśiṣṭha-Karāla and Yājñavalkya-Janaka conversation, 11 in the Nārāyaṇīya-dharma, 2i in the Anugītā, and the rest in the Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Karṇa, and Strī parvas; and in almost all these places, these stanzas have come at proper places with reference to the anterior and posterior contexts and are not interpolations. Nay, some of these stanzas seem to have been taken into the Gītā by way of summarising. For instance, in order to understand the stanza "sahasra yuga paryantam" etc. (Gī. 8.17), it would have been necessary to define the words 'varṣa' and 'yuga'; and in the Bhārata (Śān. 231) and the Manu-Smṛti,

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naitat tvayy upapadyate (Gī. 2.3); trāyate mahato bhayāt (2.40); aśāntasya kutaḥ sukham (2.66); utsīdeyur ime lokāḥ (3.24); mano durnigrahaṁ calam (6.35); mam ātmā bhūtabhāvanaḥ (9.5); moghāśā moghakarmāṇaḥ (9.12); samohaṁ sarvabhūteṣu (9.29); dīptānalārkadyutim etc. (11.17); sarva bhūtahite ratāḥ (12.4); tulya nindā stutiḥ (12.19); saṁtuṣṭo yena kenacit (12.19); samaduḥkhasukhaḥ svasthaḥ (14.24); trividhā karmacodanā (18.18); nirmamaḥ śānto (18.53); brahmabhūyāya kalpate (18.53); etc., etc.,

this stanza has been given after first defining these words. But in the Gītā, this stanza has been mentioned without defining 'yuga'

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ete. Considering the matter from this point of view, it cannot be said that these stanzas could have been adopted from the Gītā into the various chapters of the Mahābhārata; and it is improbable that all these stanzas have been taken into the Gītā from all those various chapters. Therefore, one is bound to come to the conclusion that the writer of the Gītā must have been the same as the person who wrote these chapters. I must also mention here that, just as, many stanzas from the Manu-Smṛti find their way into the Mahābhārata, [1] so also can we trace to the Manu-Smṛti, the whole of the stanza "sahasra yuga paryantam" (8.17) in the Gītā, with slight verbal alterations; and the semi-stanza "śreyān svadharmo viguṇaḥ paradharmāt svanuṣṭhitāt" (Gī. 3.35 and Gī. 18.47) with the alteration that instead of 'śreyān', the word 'varam' has been used; and the semi-stanza "sarva bhūtasthaṁ ātmānam" Gī. 6.29), with the variation "sarva bhūteṣu cātmanam" (Manu. 1.73; 10.97; 12.91). In the Anuśāsanaparva of the

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[1] Prof. Bühler has, in his translation of the Manu-Smṛti, published in the Sacred Books of the East Series (Vol. XXV, pp. 533, et seq.), included a list of the stanzas from the Manu-Smṛti which are to be found in the Mahābhārata.

Mahābhārata, there is even a clear reference to the Manu-Smṛti in the words "manunā bhihitam śāstram" (Anu. 47. 35).

If instead of considering the similarity of words, one considers the similarity of meaning, the same conclusion is fortified. I have in previous chapters shown the similarity between the Karma-Yoga of the Gītā and the Energistic Bhāgavata or Nārāyaṇīya religion. It is true that the genesis of Saṁkarṣaṇa from Vasudeva, Pradyumna from Saṁkarṣaṇa, Aniruddha from Pradyumna, and Brahmadeva from Aniruddha, being the genesis of the visible world mentioned in the Nārāyaṇīya-dharma (Śān. 339. 71, 72) has not been adopted in- to the Gītā. There are besides other differences between the religion of the Gītā and the Nārāyaṇīya religion. But, although the idea of the four-fold (catur-vyūha) Parameśvara is not accepted by the Gītā, yet, if one considers the propositions of the Gītā that, (i) the devotion to the singular (eka-vyūha), Vasudeva is the 'king of paths'; that (ii) whatever other deities are worshipped, that amounts to the worship of Vasudeva;

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that (iii) devotees are of four kinds; that (iv) devotees of the Blessed Lord must perform their duties according to their religion, and keep going the cycle of Yajñas; and that (v) it is not proper to take to Renunciation (saṁnyāsa) etc., one comes

to the conclusion that the Gītā religion is the same as the Bhāgavata religion; and as I have stated before, the tradition of Vivasvān-Manu-Ikṣvāku is common to both. In the same way, the Vedānta or the Spiritual Knowledge expounded in the Gītā is consistent with the Knowledge of the Brahman as mentioned in the Sanatsujātīya, the Śukānu-praśna, the Yājñavalkya-Janaka conversation, or the Anugītā, as will be appreciated by anyone who reads those chapters. Just as the Gītā, while accepting the 25 Fundamental Elements of Kāpila-Sāṃkhya philosophy, and the doctrine of the efflorescence of the constituents (guṇotkarṣa), yet accepts as Eternal, a further Element beyond Prakṛti (Matter) and Puruṣa (Spirit), so also has it been maintained in detail, in the Vaśiṣṭha-Karāla-Janaka conversation, and in the Yājñavalkya-Janaka conversation in the Śāntiparva that there is a '26th' Element beyond the 25 Elements, and that one does not obtain Isolation (kaivalya) unless one has acquired the Knowledge of that '26th' Element. It is not that this similarity of thought appears only with reference to Karma-Yoga and Spiritual Knowledge; but there are many chapters to be found in the Mahābhārata which correspond with the other subsidiary subjects in the Gītā. For instance, in the beginning of the first chapter of the Gītā, Duryodhana has described both the armies to Droṇācārya, and he has again given the same description later on in the 51st chapter of the Bhīṣmaparva to Droṇācārya. There is in the beginning of the Śāntiparva, a dejection expressed by Yudhiṣṭhira, which is similar to the dejection experienced by



Arjuna in the latter part of the first chapter of the Gītā; and when there was occasion to kill Bhīṣma and Droṇa by 'Yoga'. Arjuna has again uttered similar words of dejection (Bhīṣma. 97.4 – 7 and 108.88 – 94). Arjuna has said in the beginning of the Gītā that it was no use obtaining victory if he were to kill those very persons for whom that happiness was to be acquired (Gīt. 1.32, 33); and later on, after all the Kauravas

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had been killed in the war, Duryodhana has given expression to the same sentiment (Śalya. 31.42 – 51). As in the beginning of the second chapter, two different paths, namely, the Sāṁkhya and the Karma-Yoga have been mentioned, so also have two paths been described not only in the Nārāyaṇīya-dharma, but also in the Jāpakopākhyāna, and the Janaka-Sulabhā conversation in the Śāntiparva (Śān. 196 and 320); and the ideas expressed in the third chapter that Karma (Action) is superior to akarma (Inaction), and that if one does not perform Action, he will not find even food to eat, are expressed in the beginning of the Vanaparva by Draupadī to Yudhiṣṭhira (Vana. 32); and the same ideas have been repeated again in the Anugītā. The idea that Brahmadeva created the Yajna and human beings at the same time etc., which appear in the Gītā, appear also in other places in the Śāntiparva, besides in the descriptions of the Nārāyaṇīya religion (Śān. 267), and also in the Manu-Smṛti; and the idea that there is no sin in performing

Action according to one's own religious duties, has also appeared in the Tulādhāra-Jājali conversation, and in the Brahmin-Hunter conversation (Śān. 260 – 283 and Vana. 206 – 215). Besides this, the little information which the Gītā contains regarding the creation of the Cosmos, in the seventh and eighth chapters, is similar to the description of such creation given in the Śukānupraśna in the Śāntiparva (Śān. 231); and the information regarding the various physical postures (āśanas) prescribed in the Pātanjala-Yoga, which appears in the sixth chapter of the Gītā is again repeated in detail in the Śukānupraśna (Śān. 239), and later on in the 300th chapter of the Śāntiparva and also in the Anugītā (Aśva. 19). The description of ordinary and best things given in the conversation between the preceptor and the disciple (Aśva. 43 and 44), and the description of the manifestations of the Blessed Lord given in the tenth chapter of the Gītā, may without the slightest doubt be said to be exactly the same in meaning. It is stated in the Mahābhārata that the Cosmic Form which was shown by the Blessed Lord to Arjuna, was also shown by Him to Duryodhana and others at the time of previous conciliatory efforts, and to Uttanka, after the war was over, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa was

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going back to Dvārakā; and also that it was shown by Nārāyaṇa to Nārada, and by Dāśarathī Rāma to Paraśurāma. (U. 130;

Aśva. 55; Śān. 339; Vana. 99). It is true that the description of the Cosmic Form given in the Gītā, is more detailed and beautiful than the descriptions in all these four places; but considering the matter from the point of view of similarity of subject, there is nothing new in the description in the Gītā, as will be clearly seen by anybody who reads these various descriptions. There are to be found descriptions in the Anugītā (Aśva. 36 – 39), and also in other places in the Śāntiparva (Śān. 285; and 300 – 311) as to how diversity comes into being in the world as a result of the sattva, rajas, and tamas constituents, what the characteristic features of these constituents are, and how all the activity is of these constituents and not of the Ātman, which are similar to the descriptions in the 14th and 15th chapters of the Gītā. In short, although the description of certain things given in the Gītā may be more exhaustive, having regard to the occasion where it appears in the Gītā, and although the arrangement, of those various subjects may also be different in the Gītā, yet, we come across ideas in the Mahābhārata which are more or less the same as those in the Gītā, but are spread out in some place or other; and I need not say that with this similarity of ideas, there is also to some extent a similarity of diction. The similarity in the matter of the month of Mārgaśīrṣa is indeed astounding. As this month has been given primary importance in the Gītā, as is shown by the words "māsānām mārgaśīrṣo 'ham" (Gī. 10.35), so also, where there was twice occasion to mention the names of months with reference to fasting in the

Anuśāsanaparva of the Mahābhārata, the counting of the months has been started with Mārgaśīrṣa (Anu. 106 and 109). The ideas of Self-Identification, or of universal good, as also the difference between the Materialistic, Intuitionist, and Meta- physical aspects, and the description of the Devayāna and the Pitṛyāna paths taken after death, which appear in the Gītā, have also appeared several times in the Mahābhārata; but as this has been dealt with in great detail in the previous chapters, I shall not repeat the same subject-matter here.

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Whether one considers the similarity of diction, or the similarity of subject-matter, or the six or seven references to the Gītā, which we find in the Mahābhārata, one cannot but come to the conclusion that the Gītā is a part of the Mahābhārata, and that the same man who wrote the Mahābhārata as it now exists, must also have written the Gītā as it now exists. But, I have seen people attempting to disregard all those proofs, and to dispose of them with scant respect in some way or other, and to prove that the Gītā is an interpolation. But, in my opinion, the line of reasoning adopted by these critics, who treat external evidence as no evidence, and who yield to the domination of the demon of doubt in their hearts, is illogical, and therefore, unacceptable. If it could not be reasonably explained why the Gītā should be a part of the Mahābhārata, it would be a different matter. But,

when it is proved, as has been stated in the beginning of this Appendix, that (i) the Gītā is not a purely devotional treatise, or one which deals purely with Vedānta; that (ii) it was necessary to preach the Activistic Gītā, in order to explain the principles of Morality, or the undercurrents which guided the lives of exemplary great' men, as described in the Mahābhārata, and that (iii) there was no better place, even from the poetic view-point, for placing the Gītā, than the place in which it appears in the Mahābhārata, one comes to the necessary conclusion that the Gītā has been included for proper reasons and at the proper place in the Mahābhārata, and that it is not an interpolation. The Rāmāyaṇa is also an excellent and a universally respected archaic epic like the Mahābhārata; and in it also the principles of veracity, filial duty, maternal duty, regal duty etc., have been cleverly explained with reference to the various incidents in it. But, as it was not the original intention of Vālmīki to make that epic "replete with many incidents, full of numerous doctrines regarding Morality and Immorality, and capable of giving to everybody exemplary illustrations of properly moral lives", it goes without saying that the importance of the Mahābhārata is greater than that of the Rāmāyaṇa, from the point of view of the decisions contained in them respectively with reference to Morality and

Immorality, the Doable and the Not-Doable, and Ethics. The Mahābhārata is not merely an epic or merely a history, but it is a Samhita (summary) dealing with delicate situations of Duty and Non-Duty; and if such a religious epitome does not contain the scientific and logical description of the Philosophy of Karma-Yoga, where else could it come? Such an exposition could certainly not have been included in a treatise which deals merely with Vedānta. An epitome of religion is certainly the most proper place for it; and if the writer of the Mahābhārata had not so included it, this immense book, which, deals with religious and moral duties— which is in fact the fifth Veda – would to that extent have remained incomplete. The Bhagavadgītā has been included in the Mahābhārata in order to fill up this gap, and it is our great good fortune that India found an excellent Jñānin and a noble soul like the writer of the Mahābhārata, who was as proficient in worldly affairs as in Vedānta, for sponsoring the subject-matter of Karma-Yoga.

Though it has thus been proved that the present Bhagavadgītā is a part of the present Mahābhārata, yet, this matter must be dealt with in greater detail. We understand the words 'Bhārata' and 'Mahābhārata' as synonymous; but, as a matter of fact, those two works are different from each other. Considering the matter grammatically, any book which would contain a description of the illustrious deeds of the kings of the Bhārata clan could properly be called 'Bhārata'. The etymology

of the words 'Rāmāyaṇa' and 'Bhāgavata' is the same; and on that account, any book which contains a description of the Bhārati war would be sufficiently identified by being called 'Bhārata', however extensive it were. The Rāmāyaṇa is not a small work; then why is it not called 'Mahā-Rāmāyaṇa'? and why should the Bhārata be called 'Mahā-Bhārata'? It is stated at the end of the Mahābhārata that the work has been given the name 'Mahābhārata' on account of its two features of (i) greatness (mahatva) and of (ii) dealing with the Bhārata clan (bhāratatva), (Svargā. 5.44). But if we take the mere literal meaning of the word 'Mahābhārata', it means 'the big Bhārata'; and if this meaning is accepted, the question whether there was a 'small' Bhārata

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and whether such a small Bhārata did not contain the Gītā, naturally arises. There is a statement in the Ādiparva of the present Mahābhārata, that the Mahābhārata consists of 24000 stanzas, not taking into account the sub-chapters (upākhyāna), (Ā. 1. 01); and it is said later on that this was originally known as 'Jaya' (Ā. 62.20). The word 'Jaya' seems to intend to convey the idea of the 'victory' (jaya) of the Pandavas in the Bhārati war; and if that meaning is adopted, it will be seen that the book called 'Jaya' originally contained only a description of the Bhārati war, and that several sub-chapters were added later on to this historical book, so as to make of it the large work

known as the 'Mahābhārata', which dealt both with history and with Ethics. This conclusion is fortified by the specific reference to two different works named, 'Bhārata' and 'Mahābhārata', in the incantation relating to oblations to Ṛṣis to be found in the Āśvalāyana-gr̥hya-sūtras, which runs as: – "sumantu – jaimini - vaiśampāyana - paila – sūtra - bhāṣya - bhārata - mahābhārata - dharmācāryaḥ" (Ā. Gr. 3.4.4). When the 'little Bhārata' had thus been included in the 'Mahābhārata', the 'little Bhārata' ceased to exist as an independent work, and it was naturally believed that only one work, namely the 'Mahābhārata' was the Bhārata. Even in the present version of the Mahābhārata, there is a statement that the Bhārata was first recited by Vyāsa to his own son Śuka, and afterwards to his other disciples (Ā. 1.103); and it is clearly stated that the five disciples Sumantu, Jaimini, Paila, Śuka, and Vaiśampāyana wrote five distinct Bhārata-Samhitas or Mahābhāratas (Ā. 63. 90); and there is a story that out of these five Mahābhāratas, Vyāsa retained only the Mahābhārata of Vaiśampāyana, and the Aśvamedhaparva out of the Mahābhārata of Jaimini. This explains why the names Sumantu etc., appear before the mention of the words 'Bhārata-Mahābhārata' in the incantation about oblations to Ṛṣis. But it is not necessary to enter so deep so into that subject-matter here. The conclusion which has been drawn by Rao Bahadur Chintamanrao Vaidya in his criticism on the Mahābhārata, after considering this subject-matter, is in my opinion correct; and therefore, it is quite enough if I say



here that the present version of the Mahābhārata is not the original Mahābhārata, but that there were various editions of the Bhārata and the Mahābhārata; and that the present Mahābhārata is the form it ultimately acquired. It cannot be said that the first original Bhārata out of these did not contain the Gītā. It is quite clear that the writer of the Mahābhārata has written the present Gītā on the authority of former works, just as the Sanatsujātīya, the Viduranīti, the Śukānupraśna, the Yājñavalkya-Janaka conversation, the Viṣṇu-sahasranāma, the Anugītā, the Nārāyaṇīya-dharma and other chapters were so written, and that it was not written independently. At the same time, it cannot be definitely said that the writer of the Mahābhārata did not make any change in the original Gītā. From what has been stated above, anybody will come to the conclusion that the present Gītā of 700 stanzas is a part of the present Mahābhārata, that both have been compiled by the same hands, and that the present Gītā, has not been subsequently interpolated by anybody into the present Mahābhārata. I will say later on what in my opinion is the date of the present Mahābhārata, as also what I have to say regarding the original Gītā.

## PART II. – THE GĪTĀ AND THE UPANIṢADS.

Let us now consider the inter-relation between the Gītā and the various Upaniṣads. Not only have the various Upaniṣads been generally referred to in the present Mahābhārata, but the description about the warfare between the Vital Organs (prāṇendriya) contained in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and the Chāndogya (Bṛ. 1.3; Chān. 1.2) appears in the Anugītā (Aśva. 23); and the words "na me steno janapade" etc., uttered by the king Kaikeya Aśvapati (Chan. 5. 11. 15), appear in the Śāntiparva, where the story of that king is related (Śān. 77. 8). Similarly, the principles enunciated in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka, that "na pretya saṁjñāsti", i.e., "after death, the Knower (jñātā) does not any more possess any name (saṁjñā)", and that the Knower is merged in the Brahman (Bṛ. 4.5.13) appear in the Śāntiparva in the conversation between Janaka and Pañcaśikha; and in the

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same place, at the end, the illustration of the river and the sea, which appears in the Praśna and the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣads (Praśna. 6.5; Muṇ. 3.2.8), has been used with reference to the man who has become free from Name and Form. Besides, the comparison of Reason with a charioteer, after comparing the

organs with horses, which appears in the conversation between the Brahmin and the Hunter (Vana, 210), and in the Anugītā, has been taken from the Kaṭhōpaniṣad (Ka. 1.3.3); and the stanzas "eṣa sarveṣu bhūteṣu gūḍhātmā" (Kaṭha. 3. 12), and "anyatra dharmād anyatrādharmāt" (Kaṭha. 2. 14) also appear with slight verbal alterations in the Śāntiparva (187.29 and 331.44). I have already stated above that the stanza "sarvataḥ pāṇipādaṁ" etc., from the Śvetāśvatara appears several times in the Mahābhārata, as also in the Gītā. But this similarity does not end here, and there are numerous other sentences from the Upaniṣads, which appear in various places in the Mahābhārata. Nay, we may safely assert that the Spiritual Knowledge in the Mahābhārata has been practically adopted from the Upaniṣads.

Not only is the Spiritual Knowledge contained in the Bhagavadgītā consistent with the Upaniṣads, like the Mahābhārata, but, as has been stated by me in the ninth and the thirteenth chapters above, the Path of Devotion described in the Gītā is also fully consistent with this Spiritual Knowledge. Without, therefore, repeating the same subject-matter, I will only say here in short, that the non-lamentability of the Ātman mentioned in the second chapter of the Gītā, the form of the Imperishable Brahman described in the eighth chapter, the consideration of the Body (kṣetra) and the Ātman (kṣetrajña) contained in the thirteenth chapter, and especially the form of the 'Knowable' (jñeya) Parabrahman described in that chapter,

are all subjects which have been literally copied into the Gītā from the Upaniṣads. Some of the Upaniṣads are in prose, whereas others are in verse. Expressions from the prose Upaniṣads cannot, of course, come as they are in the Gītā, which is in verse form; yet, the ideas "whatever is, is; and whatever is not, is not" (Gī. 2.16), "yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaran bhāvaṁ" etc. (Gī. 8. 6), (i.e., "whatever ideas are entertained in the Mind" etc.~Translator.) etc., which

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appear in the Gītā, are from the Chāndogyopaniṣad; and the ideas and sentences, "kṣīṇe puṇye" etc. (Gī. 9.21), "jyotiṣāṁ jyotiḥ" (Gī. 13.17), or "mātrāsparśaḥ" (Gī. 2.14) etc., are from the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad, as will be apparent to anyone who has read those Upaniṣads. But, if one does not consider the prose Upaniṣads, but considers only the Upaniṣads in verse form, this similarity becomes more explicit; because, some verses from these verse-formed Upaniṣads have been taken literally and word for word into the Gītā. For instance, six or seven stanzas from the Kaṭhopaniṣad have been taken as they are, or with slight verbal alterations into the Gītā. The stanza "āścaryavat paśyati" etc. (2, 29) in the Gītā is very similar to the stanza "āścaryo vaktā" etc., in the second valli of the Kaṭhopaniṣad (Kaṭha. 2.7); and the stanza "na jāyate mriyate va kadācit" etc. (Gī. 2.20), and the semi-stanza "yad icchanto brahmacaryaṁ caranti" etc. (Gī. 8. 11), are word for word the

same in the Gītā and in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad (Kaṭha. 2.19; 2.15). I have already mentioned above that the stanza "indriyāṇi parāṇyāhuḥ" (Gī. 3.42) in the Gītā has been taken from the Kaṭhōpaniṣad (Kaṭha. 3. 10). Similarly, the simile of the pippala (aśvattha) tree in the fifteenth chapter of the Gītā, has been taken from the Kaṭhōpaniṣad; and the stanza "na tad bhāsayate sūryo" etc. (Gī. 15.6), has been adopted into the Gītā with slight verbal alterations from the Kaṭha and the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣads. Many other ideas and stanzas from the Śvetāśvatarōpaniṣad find their way into the Gītā. I have shown above in the ninth chapter that the word 'Māyā' appears- for the first time in the Śvetāśvatarōpaniṣad, and that it must have been taken from that place into the Gītā and the Mahābhārata. Besides this, the description of the place proper for the study of Yoga, given in the sixth chapter of the Gītā, namely, "śucau deśe pratiṣṭhāpya" etc. (Gī. 6.11) seems to be taken from the incantation "same śucau" etc. (Śve. 2.10), and the words "samaṁ kāyaśirogrīvaṁ" etc. (Gī. 6.13) seem to have been taken from the incantation "trir unnataṁ sthāpya samaṁ śarīram" (Śve. 2.8), if one considers the similarity of wording between the two. Similarly, the stanza "sarvataḥ pāṇipādaṁ" etc. and the following semi-stanza are also seen

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to be word for word the same both in the Gītā (13.13) and in the Śvetāśvatarōpaniṣad (Śve. 3.16); and the words

"aṇoraṇīyāṁsaṁ" or "āḍityavarṇaṁ tāmasaḥ parastāt" are also to be found both in the Gītā (8. 9) and the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad (Śve. 3.9, 20). Further similarity of wording between the Gītā and the Upaniṣads is apparent from the fact that the two semi-stanzas "sarvabhūtaṣṭhaṁ ātmānam" (Gī. 6.29) and "vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyo" (Gī. 15.15) are to be found just as they are in the Kaivalyopaniṣad. But it is not necessary to further point out this similarity of wording. Nobody can entertain the slightest doubt that the Vedānta in the Gītā has been enunciated on the authority of the Upaniṣads. What has to be principally considered is whether there is a difference between the exposition of it in the Upaniṣads and the exposition in the Gītā; and if so, what that difference is. We will, therefore, now turn to that subject-matter.

The Upaniṣads are numerous, and the language of some of them is so modern, that one can clearly see that these Upaniṣads are not of the same date as the older Upaniṣads. Therefore, in considering the similarity of subject-matter between the Gītā and the Upaniṣads, I have principally referred in this chapter, for purposes of comparison, to those Upaniṣads, which are mentioned in the Brahma-Sūtras. If one tries to examine the similarity between the theories in these Upaniṣads and the Spiritual Knowledge in the Gītā, one will see, first of all, that though the characteristic features of the qualityless Parabrahman is the same in both, yet, in describing

how the Qualityful came into existence out of the Qualityless, the Gītā uses the words 'māyā' or 'ajñāna' instead of the word 'avidyā'. I have explained above in the ninth chapter that the word 'māyā' has appeared in the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad, and that this word is synonymous with 'avidyā' embodied in Names and Forms; and I have shown above that some of the stanzas from the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad appear word for word in the Gītā. The first conclusion to be drawn from this is, that although the doctrine "sarvaṁ khalv idaṁ brahma" (Chān. 3.14.1), or "sarvaṁ ātmānaṁ paśyati" (Bṛ. 4.4.23), or "sarvabhūteṣu cātmanāṁ" etc. (Īśā. 6), or possibly even the whole of the Spiritual Knowledge in the Upaniṣads has been adopted into the Gītā, yet, it was

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only after the word 'māyā' came to be used in the Upaniṣads with reference to Name-d and Form-ed 'avidyā', that the Gītā has come to be written.

Now, if one considers what difference exists between the respective expositions of Vedānta in the Gītā and the Upaniṣads, one sees that greater importance has been given in the Gītā to the Kapila-Sāṁkhya philosophy. In tie Bṛhadāraṇyaka or the Chāndogya, which deal with Spiritual Knowledge, Sāṁkhya philosophy has not even once been

mentioned; and although the words 'avyakta', 'mahān' etc. from Sāṃkhya philosophy are found in the Katha and other Upaniṣads, yet, those words are clearly interpreted there according to Vedānta philosophy and not according to Sāṃkhya philosophy; and the same argument applies to the exposition in the Maitryupaniṣad. The idea of boycotting Sāṃkhya philosophy has been carried to such an extent, that the diversity of Names and Forms in the world has been explained in the Vedānta-Sūtras by the 'Trivṛt-karaṇa' (union of three Elements) consistently with the Chāndogya, instead of by reference to the 'Pañcīkaraṇa' (union of five Elements) of Sāṃkhya philosophy (Ve. Sū. 2.4.20). Although this method of explaining the Perishable and Imperishable in Metaphysics without the slightest reference to Sāṃkhya philosophy has not been adopted in the Gītā, yet, it must also be borne in mind that Sāṃkhya doctrines have not been taken as they are into the Gītā. The Sāṃkhya doctrine that the visible world came into existence from the three-constituted imperceptible Matter (prakṛti) by the process of the 'developing-out of the constituents' (guṇotkarṣa), and that the Spirit (puruṣa) is qualityless and is the See-er, is accepted by the Gītā. But the Sāṃkhya doctrine regarding the Perishable (kṣara) and Imperishable (akṣara) has always been mentioned in the Gītā with the rider of the Non-Dualistic Vedānta that Matter (prakṛti) and Spirit (puruṣa) are not independent Elements, but are the forms or manifestations (vibhūti) of one and the same Parabrahman in the shape of the Ātman. This tacking on of the



order of creation of the universe according to the Dualistic Sāṃkhya philosophy with the Non-Dualistic doctrines of the Upaniṣads, which looks upon the Brahman

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and the Ātman as one and the same, is to be found in the exposition of Metaphysics in other places in the Mahābhārata, as in the Gītā; and thereby the inference made above, that the Gītā and the Mahābhārata must have been written by one and the same person, is intensified.

The Path of Devotion or the worship of the Perceptible contained in the exposition in the Gītā is an important matter which is not found in the Upaniṣads. It is true that mere ritualistic performances like Yajñas etc., are considered inferior, from the point of view of Spiritual Knowledge, in the Upaniṣads as also in the Bhagavadgītā; but we do not come across the worship of a perceptible human-formed Parameśvara in the older Upaniṣads. As the Realisation of the imperceptible and qualityless Parabrahman is difficult, the writers of the Upaniṣads admit the principle that one must worship the Mind, Ether, the Sun, Fire, Yajña, and other similar qualityful symbols. But the symbols, which have been mentioned in the ancient Upaniṣads for worship, do not include the human-formed Parameśvara. It is stated in the

Maitryupaniṣad that Rudra, Śiva, Viṣṇu, Acyuta, Nārāyaṇa, etc., are all forms of the Paramātmān (Mai. 7. 7); and the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad even contains the words 'Maheśvara' etc.; and there are also in the Śvetāśvatara such expressions as "jñātvā devaṁ mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ" (Śve. 5. 13), (i.e., "by Realising God, all bonds are broken" ~Translator.) or, "yasya deve parā bhaktiḥ" (Śve. 6. 23). But one cannot definitely say that human-formed incarnations of Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu etc.; are intended by these expressions; because, the deities Rudra and "Viṣṇu are both Vedic, that is, ancient; and it cannot be said that the above-mentioned Upaniṣads did not refer to the ancient sacrificial ritual, which was later on given the form of the worship of Viṣṇu, as shown, by the words "yajño vai viṣṇuḥ" (Tai. Sām. 1.7.4). Nevertheless, if someone says that the idea of human-formed incarnations was conceived in those days, that cannot be said to be improbable; because, the word 'bhakti' (Devotion) which is to be found in the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad cannot at first sight be properly applied to worship in the shape of a Yajña. As the expressions used in the Mahānārāyaṇa

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Nṛsimhatāpanī, Rāmatāpanī, or Gopālatāpanī Upaniṣads are clearer than those in the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad, such a doubt can really speaking not arise at all about them. But, as there are no means for definitely fixing the dates of these Upaniṣads,

one cannot, with their help, satisfactorily solve the question as to when the worship of the human-formed Viṣṇu came into vogue. Nevertheless, the fact that the Vedic Path of Devotion is very ancient is satisfactorily proved in other ways. The grammarian Pāṇinī, after first mentioning in a sūtra that the word 'bhaktiḥ' is to be taken as meaning 'that, towards which Devotion exists' (Pā. 4.3.95), says in another sūtra, namely, "vāsudevārjunābhyāṁ bun" (Pā. 4.3.98), that the man who is devoted to Vāsudeva should be called 'Vāsudevaka', and the man who is a devotee of Arjuna should be called 'Arjunaka'; and Patañjali, in commenting on this in his Mahābhāṣya, has said that the word 'Vāsudeva' in this sūtra is the name of a Kṣatriya, or of the 'Bhagavanta'. Dr. Bhandarkar has proved that the commentary of Patanjali was written about 250 years before the Christian era; and there is no dispute about the fact that Pāṇinī belonged to a much earlier period. Besides, even Buddhistic religious texts contain a reference to Devotion; and I have proved later on in detail that the Bhāgavata religion must have been the cause for principles of Devotion entering into the Buddhistic Mahāyāna cult. Therefore, it is proved beyond doubt that the Path of Devotion was well established in India long before the date of Buddha, that is to say necessarily more than 600 years before the Christian era. The Nārada-Pañcarātra, or the Bhakti-Sūtras written by Śāṇḍilya or Nārada, are later in point of time. But thereby, the ancientness of the Bhāgavata religion, or of the Path of Devotion, is in no way affected. It will be seen from the exposition made in the

Gītā-Rahasya that (i) the present Path of Devotion has been gradually evolved out of the forms of worship of the Qualityful mentioned in the ancient Upaniṣads; that (ii) the Pātañjala Yoga has given further importance to the Path of Devotion, as in that Yoga some perceptible or visible object has to be placed before the eyes for fixing the mind; and that (iii) the Path of Devotion has

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not come into India from anywhere else, nor was there any necessity for it to come from anywhere else. Supporting, from the point of view of the Vedānta of the Upaniṣads, this Path of Devotion, and especially the worship of Vāsudeva, which had in this way come into existence in India, is an important part of the subject-matter of the Gītā.

But a still more important part of the Gītā is the harmonisation of the Karma-Yoga with Devotion and the Knowledge of the Brahman. Although the Upaniṣads have considered the duties fixed for the four castes, or the ritualistic performances mentioned by the Śrutis as inferior, yet, some of the Upaniṣads say that they have got to be performed for the purification of the Mind, and that it is not proper to give them up even after the Mind has been purified. Nevertheless, several of the Upaniṣads may be said to ordinarily incline towards

Abandonment of Action. There are statements in some Upaniṣads, as in the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad, that Action must be performed so long as life lasts, such as, "kurvann eveha karmāṇi", (i.e., "Action must be performed in this world" ~Translator.); but no other Upaniṣad has justified this Karma-Yoga, which had been in vogue from ancient times, by doing away with the conflict between Spiritual Knowledge and Worldly Action as has been done in the Gītā. Way, one may safely say that the doctrines of the Gītā on this matter are different from the doctrines enunciated by many of the writers of the Upaniṣads, As I have fully discussed this question in the eleventh chapter of the Gītā-Rahasya, I do not propose to take up more space by dealing with it here.

The 'acquisition of Yoga' (yoga-sādhana), which has been referred to in the sixth chapter of the Gītā, has been fully and scientifically dealt with in the Pātañjala Yoga-Sūtras; and these Sūtras are now-a-days considered an authoritative text on this subject. These Sūtras are divided into four chapters. The word 'yoga' has been defined in the commencement of the very first chapter as "yogas cittavṛttinirodhaḥ", (i.e., "Yoga means the control of the activities of the Mind" ~Translator.); and it is stated that "abhyāsavairāgyābhyāṁ tannirodhaḥ", that is, "this control (nirodhaḥ) can be acquired.

by practice and by indifference to the world"; and afterwards the means of acquiring the Yoga such as, yama, niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, etc. have been described; and in the 3rd and 4th chapters, it is explained how perfection and the supernatural powers of 'aṇimālaghimā ' (i.e., 'self-contraction, levitation' etc. ~Translator.) are acquired by the 'asamprajñāta' or 'nirvikalpa' samādhi (non-differentiating mental absorption), and how by this kind of concentration, one ultimately reaches Release in the shape of 'Brahma-nirvāṇa'. In the Bhagavadgītā also, there is first mentioned the necessity of the control of the Mind (Gī. 6.20); and after stating that the Mind must be controlled by the two means of practice (abhyāsa), and indifference to the world (vairāgya), (Gī. 6.35), it is ultimately stated how one should acquire the non-differentiating mental absorption, and what happiness that gives. But on that account, one- cannot say that the Bhagavadgītā accepts as correct the Pātañjala-Yoga, or that the Pātañjala-Sūtras are earlier in point of time than the Bhagavadgītā. The Blessed Lord has nowhere advised that one should spend one's life holding one's nose in the hand for controlling the breath, in order to acquire perfect concentration, as directed in the Pātañjala-Sūtras. Control of the Mind and mental absorption have been mentioned in the Gītā as means for acquiring that Equability of Mind, which, is necessary for acquiring Karma-Yoga. Therefore, it must be said that in this matter, the Gītā comes nearer to the Śvetāśvatara or the Hatha Upaniṣads than

the Pātañjala-Sūtras. The Dhyānabindu, Churikā, and Yoga-tattva Upaniṣads deal with Yoga. But, as Yoga is the principal subject-matter in them, and its praises are sung everywhere, it is not proper to attempt to fully harmonise these one-sided Upaniṣads with the Gītā, which considers the Karma-Yoga as the most superior path; and such a harmony cannot in fact be brought about. In the introduction to his English translation of the Bhagavadgītā, Mr. Thompson has said that the Karma-Yoga in the Gītā is a form of the Pātañjala-Yoga; but such a thing is absolutely impossible; and I say that this confusion has arisen in the mind of Mr. Thompson, because he has not understood the correct meaning of the word 'Yoga' in the Gītā. Because, whereas the Gītā Karma-Yoga is Energistic, the Pātañjala-Yoga

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is just the opposite, that is to say, renunciatory; and it is, therefore, not possible that the one should have come out of the other; and it is nowhere stated in the Gītā that such is the case. Nay, the original meaning of the word 'Yoga' was Karma-Yoga; and one may safely say that that word came to be commonly understood in the single meaning of 'Yoga' in the shape of 'Concentration of the Mind', after the days of the Pātañjala-Sūtras. Whatever may be the case, the Desireless Path of Action adopted in ancient times by Janaka and others was similar to the Yoga, that is, the Karma-Yoga of the Gītā; and it has clearly been adopted from the Bhāgavata religion

traditionally handed down by Manu to Ikṣvāku etc., and was not derived from the Pātañjala-Yoga.

This will have clearly shown to my readers the similarity and the dissimilarity between the Gītā-doctrine and the Upaniṣads. Most of these matters have been dealt with by .me in the (Gītā-Rahasya. I shall, therefore, say here only this much that, although the Knowledge of the Brahman in the Gītā has been mentioned on the authority of the Upaniṣads, yet, the Gītā has not merely copied the Metaphysical Knowledge in the Upaniṣads, but by adding to it the worship of Vāsudeva, as also the Sāṃkhya Science of the Perishable and the imperishable, that is to say, of the creation of the universe, it has principally expounded the Vedic religion of Karma- Yoga, which is easy to follow, and is beneficial in this life and the next; and in this way the Gītā is superior to the Upaniṣads. It is, therefore, not proper to stretch the meaning of the Gītā doctrinal y, in order to establish a non-existing harmony between the Gītā and the renunciatory Upaniṣads, except in the matter of the Knowledge of the Brahman. It is true that the Metaphysical Knowledge in both is the same. Yet, although the head in the shape of the Spiritual Knowledge is the same, the Sāṃkhya path and the Karma- Yoga are the two equally important hands of the Vedic religion; and the Gītā has emphatically supported Action based on Knowledge, as has been done in the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad, as is clearly shown in the eleventh chapter of the Gītā-Rahasya.



## **PART III. – THE GĪTĀ AND THE BRAHMA-SŪTRAS.**

Having in this way considered the similarity and the dissimilarity between the Bhagavadgītā and the Upaniṣads, which chiefly deal either with Spiritual Knowledge, or with Devotion, or with Yoga, it is really speaking not necessary to compare the Gītā with the Brahma-Sūtras; because, as Bādarāyaṇācārya has written his Brahma-Sūtras in order to systematically consider the Metaphysical doctrines mentioned in the various Upaniṣads, these Sūtras cannot contain any thoughts which are not in the Upaniṣads. Still, there is a clear reference to the Brahma-Sūtras at the beginning of the 13th chapter of the Bhagavadgītā, where the subject-matter of the Body and the Ātman is being dealt with, in the words:

ṛṣibhir bahudhā gītāṃ chandobhir vividhaiḥ prthak |  
brahmasūtrapadais caiva hetumadbhir viniścitaiḥ ||  
(Gī. 13.4),

that is, the Body and the Ātman have been described "in various ways, in different metres, by different Ṛṣis, disconnectedly; and also definitely and logically in the Brahma-

Sūtra-padas"; and, if one considers these Brahma-Sūtras to be the same as the present Vedānta-Sūtras, it follows that the present Gītā must have been written after the date of the present "Vedānta-Sūtras. It is, therefore, very necessary to determine which these Brahma-Sūtras are, in order to fix the date of the Gītā. [1] Because, there is no work now available besides the Vedānta-Sūtras, which bears the name of Brahma-Sūtras, nor has such a work been referred to anywhere; and it is not proper to say that the Gītā was written after the date of the present Brahma-Sūtras; because, it is traditionally believed that the Gītā is more ancient than these Brahma-Sūtras. Possibly, the phrase "brahma-sūtra-padaīḥ" has been interpreted in the Śāṅkarabhāṣya to mean "the phrases in the Śrutis or the Upaniṣads, which refer to the Brahman", in order to get over this difficulty. But, on the other hand, Ānandagiri, who

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has written a commentary on the Śāṅkarabhāṣya, and Rāmānujācārya and Madhvācārya, who are other commentators on the Gītā, have said that the words "brahma-sūtra-padaīś caiva" mean the Sūtras "athāto brahmajijñāsā"

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[1] This subject-matter has been considered by the late Mr. Telang; and Prof. Tukaram Ramchandra Amalnerkar B. A. has also published an essay on this subject in 1895.

etc. of Bādarāyaṇācārya; and Śrīdhara Svāmī interprets them in both ways. We have, therefore, to determine the true meaning of this stanza independently. This stanza mentions TWO DIFFERENT places, where the subject-matter of the Body and the Ātman have been described; for, it says that this subject-matter has been mentioned "in DIFFERENT ways, by different Ṛṣis, DISCONNECTEDLY," and also (caiva) "definitely and logically in the Brahma-Sūtra-padas"; and this is apparent from the word 'caiva' (i.e., 'and also'). Not only are these two places different, but the first place, namely, the description given by Ṛṣis, is "in different metres, and disconnected, and in different ways"; and, as appears by the third case plural termination of the word 'ṛṣibhiḥ', it has been made by VARIOUS Ṛṣis; whereas, the other description contained in the Brahma-Sūtra-padas is "definite and logical". This is the special difference between the two, which has been brought out in this stanza. The word 'hetumat' appears in various places in the Mahābhārata, and means an 'exposition made according to the method of logicians, by showing reason and conclusion'. Take for instance, the conversation of Sulabhā. with Janaka, or what Śrī Kṛṣṇa said in the Darbar of the Kauravas, when He went there as an ambassador. It is stated in the Mahābhārata itself that the first conversation was 'hetumat' and 'arthavat' (Śān. 320. 191); and that the other one was 'sahetuka' (Udyo. 131. 2). From this, it follows that where pros and cons are discussed, and some unambiguous and definite conclusion has been drawn at the end, that method of dealing with the

subject is called 'hetumadbhir viniścitaīḥ'. These words cannot be applied to miscellaneous and inconsistent conclusions drawn in one way in one place and in another way in another place. Therefore, if we have to- maintain the distinction and contrast between "ṛṣibhiḥ. bahudhā vividhaiḥ pṛthak" (i.e., "by Ṛṣis, in different places, indifferent ways, and disconnectedly" ~Translator.) and "hetumadbhir viniścitaīḥ" (i.e., "definitely and logically" ~Translator.),

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it becomes necessary to say that the words "the description, in various ways, by different Ṛṣis, disconnectedly, and in different metres" intend to mean the disconnected and miscellaneous sentences appearing in the different Upaniṣads; and that the words "definite and logically advanced Brahma-Sūtra-padas" signify the description in the Brahma-Sūtras, in which a definite and unambiguous conclusion has been drawn in the end by showing pros and cons. It must also be borne in mind that, as the ideas mentioned by the Ṛṣis in the Upaniṣads were related by them, as they occurred to them, that is to say, disconnectedly, the true import of the Upaniṣads cannot be understood unless the ideas contained in them are harmonised. And, therefore, it becomes necessary to mention the work in which the Upaniṣads have been harmonised with each other by the explanation of reasons and conclusions, at the same time when the Upaniṣads themselves are mentioned.

When this stanza in the Gītā has been interpreted in this way, it is quite clear that the Upaniṣads and the Brahma- Sūtras were earlier in point of time than the Gītā. There is, of course, no dispute about the most important ones of these Upaniṣads; because, the stanzas from these Upaniṣads are found to have been copied word for word into the Gītā. But, there is room for doubt where the Brahma-Sūtras are concerned; because, although the word 'Bhagavadgītā' has not appeared literally in the Brahma-Sūtras, yet, the Bhagavadgītā is believed by the writers of the Bhāṣyas to have been referred to by the word ' Smṛti ' in some of the Sūtras at least. The Brahma-Sūtras, which, according to the Śāṅkarabhāṣya, refer to the Bhagavadgītā by the word 'smṛti' are principally the following ones. –

BRAHMA-SUTRAS(chapter, pada, and sutra )	GĪTĀ (Chapter and stanza.)
1.2.6, smṛteś ca	18.61, īśvaraḥ sarvabhūtānāṁ etc., (whole stanza)
1.3.23, api ca smaryate	15.6, na tad bhāsayate sūryaḥ etc.
2.1.36, upapadyate cāpyupalabhyate ca	15.3, na rupam asyeha tathopalabhyate etc.

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2.3.45, api ca smaryate	15.7, mamaivāṁśo jīvaloke jīvabhūtaḥ etc.
3.217, darśayati cātho api smaryate	13.12, jñeyam yat tat pravakṣyāmi etc.
3.3.31, aniyamaḥ sarvāsānavirodhaḥ śabdānumānābhyām	Gī. 8.26, śuklakṣṇe gatī hy ete etc.
4. 1. 10, smaranti ca	Gī. 6.11, śucau deśe etc.
4.2.21, yoginaḥ prati ca smaryate	8.23, yatra kāle tv anāvṛttim āvṛttim caiva yoginaḥ etc.

Even if some out of these 8 references are considered ambiguous, yet, in my opinion the fourth (Bra. Sū. 2.3.45) and the eighth (Bra. Sū. 4.2.21) are absolutely unambiguous; and it must be borne in mind that on this question the four commentators, Śaṅkarācārya, Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, and Vallabhācārya, are of the same opinion. The sūtra "api ca smaryate " (2.3.45) i.e., "and the Smṛti says the same thing", appears in the Brahma-Sūtras, in the course of the consideration of the mutual inter-relation between the

Personal Self (Jīvātman) and the Absolute Self (paramātman), after it has first been definitely stated in the sūtra, "nātmā śruter nityatvāc ca tābhyaḥ" (Bra. Sū. 2.3.17), that the Individual Self is not created from the Highest Self like the other objects in the world; after stating in the sūtra, "amśo nānāvyapadeśāt" etc. (2. 3. 43), that the Jīvātman is a 'part' (amśa) of the Paramātman, and after giving the authority of the Śrutis by saying "mantra varṇāc ca" (2.3.44) This Smṛti is the sentence "mamaivāmśo jīvaloke jīvabhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ" in the Gītā (Gī. 15.7) according to all the commentators. But the last reference is even more unambiguous than this. I have stated above in the tenth chapter that the two periods of Devayāna and Pitṛyāna occupy the six months of the Uttarāyana and the six months of the Dakṣiṇāyana respectively; and that instead of interpreting these phrases as indicating 'time', Bādarāyaṇācārya has

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interpreted them as meaning the respective deities presiding during those periods of time (Ve. Sū. 4. 3. 4). The sūtra, "yoginaḥ prati ca smaryate" (Bra. Sū. 4.2.21), that is, "these periods of time are proper in the case of Yogins according to the Smṛti", has been written in answer to the doubt whether the words 'dakṣiṇāyana' and 'uttarāyana', are never to be understood as indicating 'time'; and it has been clearly stated in the Gītā in the following words, that these periods of time

are proper for Yogins, namely, "yatra kale tvanāvṛttim āvṛttim caiva yoginaḥ". From these references, one has to say with the commentators that in these two places at least the word 'smṛti' used in the Brahma-Sūtras has reference only to the Bhagavadgītā.

But if one believes that the Brahma-Sūtras have been specifically mentioned in the Gītā, and that the Gītā has been specifically referred to in the Brahma-Sūtras by the word 'smṛti', there arises an inconsistency between the two from the point of view of date of writing; because, as the Bhagavadgītā contains a clear reference to the Brahma-Sūtras, the Brahma-Sūtras must be looked upon as prior in point of time to the Gītā; and if one interprets the word 'smṛti' in the Brahma-Sūtras as meaning the Gītā, the Gītā becomes earlier in point of time than the Brahma-Sūtras. The same Brahma-Sūtras cannot once be earlier in point of time and again later in point of time than the Gītā. Well; if, in order to escape from this difficulty, we interpret the words "brahma-sūtra-padaīḥ", as has been done in the Śāṅkarabhāṣya, then the words "hetumadbhir viniścitaiḥ" become meaningless; and if we say that the word 'smṛti' used in the Brahma-Sūtras refers to some Smṛti other than the Gītā, then we have to say that all the commentators were wrong; and even if we say that they were all wrong, the fact still remains that we cannot say what work is referred to by the word 'smṛti'. Then, how are we to get out of this difficult position? In my opinion, there is only



one way in which we can escape this difficulty. If we say that the same man who wrote the Brahma-Sūtras also gave their present form to the Bhārata and to the Gītā, the difficulty is solved. It is usual to refer to the Brahma-Sūtras as 'Vyāsa-Sūtras', and Ānandagiri has stated in his commentary

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on the Śāṃkarabhāṣya on the sūtra, "śeṣatvāt puruṣārthavādo yathānyeṣviti jaiminiḥ" (Ve. Sū. 3.4.2), that Jaimini was the disciple of Vyāsa, who wrote the Vedānta-Sūtras; and in the same way, he has described the Brahma-Sūtras in the opening stanzas of his work in the following terms, namely, "śrīmadvyāsapayonidhir nidhirasau", Vyāsa, the writer of the Mahābhārata, had five disciples named, Paila, Śuka, Sumantu, Jaimini, and Vaisampayana; and I have, on the authority of the present Mahābhārata, referred above to the story that Vyāsa taught the Mahābhārata to them. When one takes both these things together, and considers the matter, one can draw the inference that the work of giving their present form to the original Bhārata and to the Gītā included in it, as also that of writing the Brahma-Sūtras was done by one and the same Bādarāyaṇa Vyāsa. This does not mean that Bādarāyaṇācārya wrote something new in the shape of the present Mahābhārata. All that I mean to say is that as the Mahābhārata is a very extensive work, some portions of it may have been lost or become disintegrated at the time of

Bādarāyaṇa; and that Bādarāyaṇācārya may, therefore, have critically examined different portions of the Mahābhārata which were then available, and either corrected or supplemented them wherever he found the book to be disconnected or incorrect or incomplete, or added indexes etc., and in that way either revived the book or given it its present form. It is well known that even in Marathi literature, Ekanātha has in this way revised the Jñāneśvarī; and there is even a story that as the Vyākaraṇa Mahābhāṣya in Sanskrit literature was once lost, Chandraśekharaācārya had to revive it again. In this way, one can easily understand how the stanzas of the Gītā are to be found in the other chapters of the Mahābhārata; and the fact of the clear reference to the Brahma-Sūtras in the Gītā and of the reference to the Gītā in the Brahma-Sūtras by the word 'smṛti', is easily explained. As the original Gītā, which is the foundation of the present Gītā, was available even before the time of Bādarāyaṇācārya, it was referred to in the Brahma-Sūtras by the word 'smṛti'; and it is stated in the Gītā, while revising the Mahābhārata, that the subject-matter of the Body and the Ātman has been considered

in detail in the Brahma-Sūtras [1]. There are other references in the present Mahābhārata to sūtra-works, similar to the reference to the Brahma-Sūtras in the present Gītā. For instance, in the Aṣṭāvakra-Dik conversation in the Anuśāsanaparva, we find the sentence, "anṛtāḥ striya ity evaṁ sūtrakāro vyavasyati" (Anu. 19.6). Similarly, there are also clear

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- [1] The Brahma-Sūtras are the most important book on Vedānta, and the Gītā is the most important book on Karma-Yoga, as has been shown by me in previous chapters. Therefore, if my inference that the Brahma-Sūtras and the Gītā were written by one and the same person, that is, by Vyāsa, is correct, Vyāsa becomes saddled with the authorship of both these books. I have proved this above by inferential argument. But in the new edition of the Mahābhārata according to the southern recension, which has been published by Mr. Krishnacarya of Kumbakonam, we find the following 34th stanza in the 212th chapter of the Śāntiparva (in the Vārṣṇeyādhyātma-prakaraṇa) in the description of how the various sciences and histories came into existence at the beginning of the Yuga, namely,

vedāntakarmayogaṁ ca vedavid brahmavid vibhuḥ |

dvaipāyano nijagrāha śilpaśāstraṁ bhṛguḥ punaḥ ||

In this stanza, "vedāntakarmayogaṁ" is a compound word in the singular number. But that has to be interpreted as meaning 'Vedānta and Karma-Yoga'. Possibly the original reading was "vedāntaṁ karmayogaṁ ca", and in writing or in printing, the diacritical nasal sign 'ṁ' in 'ntaṁ' may have been dropped. It is clearly stated in this stanza that Vyāsa obtained the two sciences of Vedānta and Karma-Yoga, and that Bhṛgu obtained the śilpaśāstra (i.e., 'the fine or mechanical arts' ~Translator.). But, this stanza is not to be found in the edition printed in the Ganpat Krishnaji Press in Bombay or in the Calcutta edition. The 212th chapter of the Śāntiparva in the Kumbakonam edition is the

references elsewhere in the Mahābhārata to the Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa (Śānti. 318.16 – 23), the Pañcarātra (Śānti. 339.107), the Nirukta of Yāska (Śānti. 342.71), and Manu (Anu. 37.16). But, as it was not usual for people to learn by heart all the parts of the Mahābhārata, a doubt naturally arises about the extent to which the reference to other books in the Mahābhārata in other places besides the Gītā, can be looked upon as reliable for the purpose of the determination of the date of either. Because, those parts which are not learnt by heart can easily be tampered with by the addition of interpolated stories or stanzas. Yet, in my opinion, there is no reason why we should not take advantage of these other references in order to prove that the reference to the Brahma-Sūtras in the Gītā is not a sole, or an unprecedented, and therefore, an unreliable reference.

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210th chapter of the Bombay and Calcutta editions. I am very grateful to my friend Dr. Ganesh Krishna Garde for having drawn my attention to this stanza in the Kumbakonam recension. According to his opinion, the word 'karmayoga' in this place refers to nothing else but the Gītā, and the authorship of both the Gītā and the Vedānta-Sūtras is by this stanza given to Vyāsa. Some doubt may arise on this point, because this reading is to be found in only one out of three editions of the Mahābhārata; but it at least proves that my inference about the author of Vedānta being the same as the author of Karma-Yoga, is neither new, nor without authority.

I have proved above by critically examining the meaning: of the words in the stanza "brahma-sūtra-padaś caiva" etc., that the Bhagavadgītā contains a reference to the present Brahma-Sūtras or Vedānta-Sūtras. But, I think there is another important and forcible reason for this reference to the Brahma-Sūtras having come into the Bhagavadgītā, and that too in the 13th chapter, that is, in the chapter which deals with the subject of the Body and the Ātman. I have already explained in the previous chapters that though the essential principle of the worship of Vasudeva has been taken into the Bhagavadgītā from the Bhāgavata or the Pañcarātra religion, yet, the four-fold (catur-vyūha) theory of the Pañcarātra religion regarding the coming into existence of Saṁkarṣaṇa, that is Jīva (Personal Self) from Vasudeva,. of Pradyumna, that is, the Mind (manas) from Saṁkarṣaṇa,. and of Aniruddha, that is, Individuation (ahamkāra) from Pradyumna, is not accepted by the Bhagavadgītā. The Brahma-Sūtras lay down the doctrine that the Personal Self (jīvātman) has not sprung from anything else (Ve. Sū. 2. 3. 17) and that it is an eternal 'part' (amśa) of the Highest Ātman,

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(paramātman), (Ve. Sū. 2. 3. 43). Therefore, Bādarāyaṇācārya has, in the second part of the second chapter, found fault with the Bhāgavata doctrine, by saying that the genesis of Saṁkarṣaṇa from Vāsudeva according to that religion is not

possible (Ve. Sū. 2.2.42); and, by arguing that, since the Mind is an organ pertaining to the Personal Self, it is impossible for Pradyumna (Manas) to spring from Jīva (Ve. Sū. 2. 2. 43), because, we never see it happen in the world that the cause or the means spring from the doer, he has to that extent logically refuted the Bhāgavata doctrine. To this, the followers of the Bhāgavata doctrine are likely to reply that they consider Vāsudeva (Īśvara), Saṁkarṣaṇa (Jīva), Pradyumna (Manas), and Aniruddha (Ahaṁkāra) as four equal Jñānins, and look upon the genesis of the one from the other as merely symbolical or unimportant. But, from this point of view, instead of there being one Parameśvara, one gets four Parameśvaras; and the Brahma-Sūtras, therefore, say, that even this reply is not satisfactory; and Bādarāyaṇa has ultimately expressed his opinion that the idea that Jīva has sprung from the Parameśvara is not acceptable to the Vedas, that is, to the Upaniṣads. (Ve. Sū. 2. 2. 44, 45). It is true that the Bhagavadgītā has adopted the principle of Action based on Devotion of the Bhāgavata religion. Nevertheless, the doctrine of the Gītā is that the Jīva has not sprung from the Parameśvara, and is not a 'son' of the Parameśvara, but a part (aṁśa) of the Paramātmā (Gī. 15.7). This doctrine about the Jīva does not form part of the original Bhāgavata doctrine; and it was, therefore, necessary to explain on what authority it had been based; because, if that had not been done, there was a likelihood of a misunderstanding arising that while accepting the Energistic Devotional principle of the Bhāgavata doctrine,

the Bhagavadgītā was also accepting the arrangement of the 'four-folded genesis' (caturvyūha) in that doctrine. Therefore, when there was occasion to refer to the nature of the Individual Self (Jīvātman) in the chapter on the Body and the Ātman, that is to say, in the very beginning of the 13th chapter, it became necessary for the Blessed Lord to explain that "My opinion about the Ātman (kṣetrajña), that is, the Jīva, is not the same as in the Bhāgavata doctrine, but

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is consistent with the opinion of the Ṛṣis, who have written the Upaniṣads". And thereafter, it became necessary for Him to say in the natural course, that, as different Ṛṣis had given disconnected descriptions in the different Upaniṣads, He accepted the harmonisation of all those opinions in the Brahma-Sūtras (Ve. Sū. 2.3.43). Considering the matter from this point of view, it will be seen that the Path of Devotion in the Bhāgavata doctrine has been adopted in to the Gītā in such a way that the objections taken to that doctrine in the Brahma-Sūtras could be obviated. Rāmānujācārya has in his commentary on the Vedānta-Sūtras given a different meaning altogether to these Sūtras (Ve. Sū. Rā. Bhā. 2.2.42 – 45). But, in my opinion, these interpretations are stretched, and not acceptable. Thibaut seems to be inclined to accept the view of the Rāmānujabhāṣya; but from the writings of Thibaut, one does not get the idea that he has properly understood the true

nature of this discussion. Even in the description of the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine, which is made at the end of the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata, it is first stated that "Vāsudeva IS ALSO (sa eva) Saṁkarṣaṇa, that is, Jīva, or the Ātman" (See Śān. 339.39 and 71 and 334.28 and 29); and the further descent of Pradyumna from Saṁkarṣaṇa etc. has then been mentioned; and in one place, it is clearly stated that some consider the Bhāgavata doctrine as four-folded (catur-vyūha), others as three- folded (tri-vyūha), others as two-folded (dvi-vyūha), and others again as single-folded (eka-vyūha), (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 348. 57). But instead of accepting these various aspects of the Bhāgavata doctrine, the present Gītā has accepted only that aspect of it, which would be consistent with the opinions of the Upaniṣads .and the Brahma-Sūtras on the question of the mutual inter- relation between the Body and the Ātman; and when this matter is taken into account, one clearly understands why it was necessary to refer to the Brahma-Sūtras in the Gītā. .Nay, we may even go so far as to say that the present Gītā has made an improvement in this respect on the original Gītā.



## **PART IV. – THE RISE OF THE BHĀGAVATA RELIGION AND THE GĪTĀ.**

I have stated in several places in the Gītā-Rahasya, and also above in this Appendix, that the principal subject-matter of the Gītā is to harmonise the Spiritual Knowledge of the Upaniṣads, and the Sāṃkhya theories about the Mutable and the Immutable, with Devotion, and principally with Desireless Action; and thereby to fully justify the Karma-Yoga scientifically. But, those who do not realise the skilfulness of the Gītā in harmonising these various subjects, or those who have a pre-conceived notion that it will be difficult to harmonise all these subjects, get the impression that many of the statements in the Gītā are mutually conflicting. For instance, these critics object that the statement in the thirteenth chapter, that all whatsoever, which exists in this world, is nothing but the qualityless Brahman, is inconsistent with the statement in the seventh chapter that all this world is nothing but the qualityful Vāsudeva (7.19); as also that the statement that "Friend and foe are alike to Me" (9.29) is inconsistent with the other statement that "Jñānins and Devotees are much beloved of Me" (7.17; 12.19), both of which statements have been made by the Blessed Lord. But I have explained in many places in the Gītā-Rahasya, that there is no real conflict between these statements, and that although it was necessary to make these apparently conflicting

statements in considering the same question, once from the Metaphysical point of view and again from the point of view of Devotion, yet, the Gītā has finally harmonised them from the comprehensive philosophical point of view. But, even to this explanation it is objected by some, that (i) although it is now possible to thus harmonise the Realisation of the imperceptible Brahman, with the Devotion to the perceptible Parameśvara, yet, it is impossible that there could have been any such harmonisation in the- original Gītā; that (ii) the original Gītā was not full of conflicting statements like the present Gītā, and that (iii) Vedāntists or the protagonists of Sāṃkhya doctrines interpolated statements in favour of their respective doctrines into the original Gītā. For instance, Prof. Garbe says that

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the original Gītā contained a harmonisation of Devotion with only Sāṃkhya and Yoga; and the harmonisation of Devotion with Vedānta and with the Karma-mārga of the Mīmāṃsā School was brought about by somebody afterwards; and he has even appended to his German translation of the Gītā, a list of those stanzas, which according to him had been subsequently interpolated into the original Gītā! These theories are entirely wrong in my opinion. These people have conceived these wrong ideas as a result of their having failed to understand the historical tradition of the various aspects of

the Vedic religion, and the real meanings of the words 'sāṃkhya' and 'yoga' used in the Gītā, and especially because these people had before their eyes the history of the unphilosophical, that is, purely devotional Christian religion. The Christian religion was originally purely devotional; and the attempt to harmonise it with the philosophical doctrines of the Greeks, or with other philosophies, was made afterwards. But that is not the case with us. The Ritualist path of the vyavasāyātmikā school, the Knowledge preached by the writers of the Upaniṣads, and Sāṃkhya and Yoga, had all reached their highest development before the Path of Devotion arose in India. Therefore, it was impossible from the very beginning that our people should countenance an independent Path of Devotion, which would be independent of all these sciences, and especially independent of the Knowledge of the Brahman preached in the Upaniṣads; and when this impossibility is taken into account, one is forced to come to the conclusion, that the form of the preaching of the Gītā-religion must, from the very beginning, have been more or less similar to the exposition contained in the present Gītā. The exposition of the Gītā in the Gītā-Rahasya has been made by me on this basis; yet, as this is a very important question, I shall here briefly state what results are arrived at, according to me, regarding the original form and the tradition of the Gītā-religion, from the historical point of view.

I have shown in the tenth chapter of the Gītā-Rahasya that the most pristine form of the Vedic religion was not pre-eminently Devotional, or Realisational, or Yogic, but was ritualistic, that is, Actional; and that the Veda-Samhitās, and

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the Brahmanas have principally enunciated this Activistic religion of sacrificial Yajñas. As this religion was later on systematically expounded in the Mīmāṃsā-Sūtras of Jaimini, it acquired the name 'Mīmāṃsaka-mārga'. But although the name 'Mīmāṃsā' was new, yet, the sacrificial religion was undoubtedly ancient, and was probably the first stage of the Vedic religion from the historical point of view. Before acquiring the name 'Mīmāṃsaka-mārga', it used to be known as 'Trayī-dharma', that is, 'the religion supported by the three Vedas'; and the same name is to be found in the Gītā (See Gī. 9. 20 and 9. 24). When this ritualistic Trayī-dharma was being rigorously observed, how was it possible to Realise the Parameśvara by this Karma, that is, this external paraphernalia of Yajñas and sacrificial rites? There then gradually arose the doubts and objections, that as Realisation was a mental process, it would be impossible to acquire Realisation, unless one contemplated on the form of the Parameśvara etc.; and this Trayī-dharma gradually came to include the Knowledge contained in the Upaniṣads, as is evident from the introductory passages at the commencement of the Chāndogya and other

Upaniṣads. This Knowledge of the Brahman contained in the Upaniṣads has subsequently acquired the name 'Vedānta'. But although this word 'Vedānta' has come into existence subsequently like the word 'Mīmāṃsā.', yet, the Knowledge of the Brahman, or the Path of Knowledge, does not, on that account, become something new. It is true that the Jñāna-kāṇḍa came to be formulated after the Karma-kāṇḍa; yet, one must not forget that both of them were ancient. The Kapila-Sāṃkhya philosophy is another and an independent branch of this Path of Knowledge. I have stated in the Gītā-Rahasya, that whereas Vedānta was Non-Dualistic, Sāṃkhya philosophy was Dualistic, and that the Sāṃkhya doctrines regarding the genesis of the Cosmos are fundamentally different. But although the Non-Dualistic Knowledge of the Brahman mentioned in the Upaniṣads is fundamentally different from the Dualistic Sāṃkhya philosophy, yet, from the point of view of Knowledge, both these paths were equally antagonistic to the prior ritualistic Path of Action (karma-mārga). This naturally gave rise to the problem of the

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harmonisation of Karma with Knowledge; and there had arisen two sects in this matter already in the times of the- Upaniṣads. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka and other Upaniṣads and the Sāṃkhya philosophers began to say that on account of the perpetual conflict between Karma and Jñāna, it was not only proper but

even necessary to give up Karma after the- Acquisition of Knowledge; and on the other hand, the Īśāvāsyā and other Upaniṣads began to say, that one cannot give up Karma even after the Acquisition of Knowledge, and that a Jñānin must continue performing Action for the purpose of carrying on the affairs of the world, after making his Reason, desireless, by cultivating apathy towards the world. An attempt has been made in the commentaries on these Upaniṣads- to do away with this conflict. But, these doctrine-supporting interpretations in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya are stretched; and they cannot be accepted if one considers the Upaniṣads independently,, as has been stated by me at the end of the eleventh chapter of the Gītā-Rahasya. It becomes clear from the exposition in the Maitryupaniṣad that this attempt was not restricted only to the harmonisation of Karma in the form of ritualistic- performances with the Knowledge of the Brahman; but that, about this time, attempts were also made to harmonise, as far as possible, the Science of the Mutable and the Immutable, which had arisen independently in the Sāṃkhya philosophy, with the Knowledge of the Brahman in the Upaniṣads. The Bṛhadāraṇyaka and other ancient Upaniṣads do not attach much importance to the Kapila Sāṃkhya philosophy. But, the Maitryupaniṣad wholly adopts the Sāṃkhya terminology, and propounds the theory that the 24 Elementary Principles of the Sāṃkhyas have originally sprung from one Parabrahman.. But even the Kapila Sāṃkhya philosophy is in support of Renunciation, that is to say,

contrary to Energism (karma). Therefore, it is seen that from very ancient times there were already three schools of Vedānta philosophy, namely, (1) the path of merely performing ritual in the shape of Sacrifice etc.;, (2) the path of abandoning Action, by means of Knowledge and. Apathy to the world, that is to say, the Path of Knowledge or the Sāṃkhya Path; and (3) the Knowledge-Action (jñāna-karma-samuccaya) path of continually performing Action,

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with Knowledge, and with, an apathetic frame of mind. From the Path of Knowledge, out of these three paths, the two-subsidary branches of Yoga and Devotion have subsequently come into existence. It is stated in the Chāndogya and other ancient Upaniṣads, that it is necessary to meditate on the Brahman in order to acquire the Knowledge of the Para-brahman; and that it is necessary to concentrate the Mind, and for that purpose, to place before the eyes, in the first place, some qualityful symbol of the Parabrahman, in order to succeed in this thought, contemplation, or meditation. As the Concentration of the Mind acquired in worshipping the Brahman thus acquired a special importance later on, Yoga, in the shape of the 'Concentration of the Mind', became an independent path by itself; and, by a tangible human-formed Parameśvara being taken for worship, instead of a qualityful symbol, the Path of Devotion gradually came into existence.

This idea of Devotion in the Path of Devotion has not come into existence independently, at some intermediate period of time, and inconsistently with the Spiritual Knowledge contained in the Upaniṣads; nor has it been imported into India from some other country. When one considers seriatim all the various Upaniṣads, one comes to the conclusion that, in the beginning, the various parts of the Yajña, or the OM-kāra, and later on, Vedic deities like Rudra, Viṣṇu, etc., or qualityful perceptible symbols of the Brahman like Ether etc., came to be worshipped for the purpose of the meditation on the Brahman; and that with the same end in view, that is, with the idea of reaching the Brahman, the Devotion to, that is, a kind of worship of, Bama, Nṛsiṃha, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Vasudeva, etc., came to be started thereafter. Out of these, the Yoga-tattva and other Upaniṣads on the Yoga, or the Nṛsiṃha-tāpanī, Rāma-tāpanī, and other Upaniṣads, which are devotional, are clearly seen to be more ancient than the Chāndogya and other Upaniṣads, when one considers their language. Therefore, it becomes necessary to say from the historical point of view, that the Paths of Yoga and' of Devotion, acquired importance only after the three paths of (i) Karma, (ii) Jñāna, or Saṁnyāsa, and (iii) Jñāna-Karma- samuccaya, described in the Chāndogya and other ancient



Upaniṣads had come into existence. But, although the paths of Yoga and of Devotion acquired importance later on, the importance of the previous Knowledge of the Brahman was not thereby diminished; and it was not possible that it should be so diminished; and therefore, even in those Upaniṣads, which support Yoga or Devotion, we find statements that the Knowledge of the Brahman is the ultimate ideal of Devotion and of Yoga; and that Rudra, Viṣṇu, Acyuta, Nārāyaṇa, or Vāsudeva and ether objects of worship, are only forms of the Paramātmān or of the Parabrahman (See Maitryu. 7.7; Rāmapū. 16; Amṛtabindu. 22 etc.). In short, the various subdivisions of religion, which have from time to time been promulgated by various Self-Realised (ātma-jñānin) sages into the Vedic religion, at different times, have arisen from the aspects of religion which were then already in vogue; and it has been the principal tendency of the growth of the Vedic religion, from the very beginning, to harmonise new aspects of religion with the older aspects; and the writers of the Smṛtis have later on expounded the arrangement of the various stages of life, by adhering to this tendency of harmonising various aspects of religion. When one considers this ancient Indian tendency of harmonising various aspects of religion, it is not proper to say that the Gītā religion was the only exception to this previous and subsequent tendency.

I have mentioned above the general history of the growth of the principal aspects of the Vedic religion, namely, the

ritualistic Karma mentioned in the Brahmanas, the Spiritual Knowledge in the Upaniṣads, the Kapila-Sāṃkhya philosophy, Yoga in the shape of Concentration of the Mind, and Devotion. Let us now consider the origin of the consideration of all these various aspects of religion which has been made in the Gītā – that is, whether it has been taken into the Gītā directly from various distinct Upaniṣads, or there is any intermediate stage. Where the Knowledge of the Brahman alone is being considered in the Gītā, stanzas from the Katha and other Upaniṣads have been adopted word for word into the Gītā; and where the Jñāna-Karma (Knowledge-Action) combination path is being dealt with, illustrations have been taken from the Upaniṣads of persons like Janaka etc. From

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these facts, one would think that the Gītā must have been based on the Upaniṣads themselves. But, if we consider the genesis of the Gītā-religion, which has been given in the Gītā itself, we find that the Upaniṣads are nowhere mentioned in it. Just as Sacrifice included in Knowledge is considered superior in the Gītā to the sacrifice of wealth (Gī. 4.33), so also does the Chāndogyopaniṣad say that human life is a kind of Yajña (sacrifice), (Chān. 3.16, 17); and in describing the worth of such a sacrifice, it says that, "the Cult of this Yajña was taught by a Ṛṣi named Ghora Āngirasa to Devakīputra Kṛṣṇa". There is no authority for looking upon this Devakīputra Kṛṣṇa as the same

as the Kṛṣṇa of the Gītā. But, even if it is assumed for a moment that both of them were one and the same, yet, it must still be borne in mind that Ghorā Āṅgīrasa has nowhere been mentioned in the Gītā as an authority for considering the Sacrifice included in Spiritual Knowledge as superior. Besides, although the path followed by Janaka was a combination of Jñāna and Karma, yet, Devotion had not been incorporated into that path in his times, as is quite clear from the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad; and, therefore, Janaka does not appear in the traditional history of the path, which combines Jñāna and Karma with Devotion; nor has the Gītā so included him. It is stated at the beginning of the fourth chapter of the Gītā (Gī. 4.1 – 3) that the religion of the Gītā was first taught by the Blessed Lord to Vivasvān in the beginning of the Yuga, then by Vivasvān to Manu, and then by Manu to Ikṣvāku; but that, as it got lost in course of time, it had sprain to be preached to Arjuna. Although these stanzas are of utmost importance for understanding the growth of the Gītā-religion, commentators have not gone beyond giving their literary meaning, in order to elucidate them; and it would appear that doing so would even not have been in their interests. Because, if it were admitted that the Gītā-religion was originally of a particular cult, other religious cults could not but to that extent suffer in importance. But, I have shown with authorities in the commencement of the Gītā-Rahasya, as also in my commentary on the first and second stanzas of the fourth chapter of the Gītā, that the tradition of the Gītā is consistent

with the tradition of the Bhāgavata religion in the Tretāyuga, that is, the last Yuga, which has

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been mentioned in the Nārāyaṇīya Upākhyāna of the Mahābhārata. Considering this similarity between the tradition of the Bhāgavata doctrine and of the Gītā-religion, one is forced to admit that the Gītā is a book which supports the Bhāgavata religion; and if there is any doubt about it, that is fully removed by the statement of Vaiśampāyana in the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 346.10), that: "in the Gītā, only the Bhāgavata religion has been mentioned". When it has been thus proved, that the Gītā, is not an independent treatise dealing with Vedānta, that is to say, with the Spiritual Knowledge of the Upaniṣads, but that it supports the Bhāgavata religion, it need not be said that any criticism on the Gītā, which does not take into account the Bhāgavata religion, must be incomplete and confusing. I will, therefore, give here in short. all the available information regarding the date when the Bhāgavata religion was first promulgated, and as to what its original form was. I have stated above in the Gītā-Rahasya that this Bhāgavata religion was also known as the 'Nārāyaṇīya', the 'Sātvata', or the 'Pañcarātra' religion.

As, many of the Vedic religious treatises written after the date of the Upaniṣads and before the date of Buddha, have been lost, the only available principal works relating to the Bhāgavata religion, in addition to the Gītā, are the Nārāyaṇīya Upākhyāna mentioned in the 18th chapter of the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 334 – 351), the Śāṇḍilya-Sūtras, the Bhāgavata-Purana, the Nārada-Pañcarātra, the Nārada-Sūtras, and the works of Rāmānujācārya and others. Out of these, the works of Rāmānujācārya have been avowedly written in about the twelfth century of the Śalivāhana era for supporting a doctrine, that is to say, in order to harmonise the Gītā with the Qualified-Monistic (viśiṣṭādvaita) Vedānta of the Bhāgavata religion. Therefore, one cannot rely on these books for determining the original form of the Bhāgavata religion; and the same is the case with the books written by Madhvācārya and other followers of the Vaiṣṇava doctrine. The Śrīmad Bhāgavata-Purana is earlier in point of time than these. But, it is stated in the very beginning of this Purana (Bhāg. Skan. 1. Ch. 4 and 5) that, because the exposition of the Renunciatory Bhāgavata religion contained in the Mahā-

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bhārata, and necessarily also in the Gītā, had not been made as it ought to have been made, and as Vyāsa on that account felt sorry, since "Desireless Action (naiṣkarmya) by itself was useless without Devotion", he, at the instance of Nārada, and

in order to put an end to his mental anguish, wrote the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa which maintained the worth of Devotion. If this story is considered from the historical point of view, it will be seen that when the doctrine of Desireless Action to which importance had been given in the original Bhāgavata religion of the Bhārata, lost its influence in course of time, and Devotion acquired importance instead, the Bhāgavata-Purana came to be written in order to expound this second Bhāgavata religion (that is, in which Devotion was predominant). The Nārada-Pañcarātra is also of the same kind; that is, it deals purely with Devotion, and contains a specific reference by name to the Bhāgavata- Purāṇa of 12 skandhas, the Brahma-Vaivarta-Purāṇa, the Viṣṇu-Purāṇa, the Gītā, and the Mahābhārata (see Nā. Pañ. 2.7.28 – 32; 3.14.73 and 4.3.154). It, therefore, follows that this work is less important than the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa for determining the original form of the Bhāgavata religion. It is possible that the Nārada-Sūtras and the Śāṇḍilya-Sūtras are earlier in date than the Nārada-Pañcarātra. Still, as the Nārada-Sūtras contain a reference to Vyāsa and to Śuka (Nā. Sū.83), there is no doubt that they are later in point of time than the Bhārata and the Bhāgavata; and as the Śāṇḍilya-Sūtras contain stanzas taken from the Bhagavadgītā (Śān. Sū. 9.15 and 83), they must be later in point of time than, the Gītā and the Mahābhārata, though earlier than the Nārada-Sūtras (Na. Sū. 83). Therefore, in order to determine the original and the ancient ' form of the Bhāgavata religion, one has ultimately to rely on the

Nārāyaṇīya Upākhyāna of the Mahābhārata. Both in the Bhāgavata-Purana (1. 3. 24) and in the Nārada-Pañcarātra (4. 3. 156 – 159; 4. 8. 81), Buddha has been referred to as an incarnation of Viṣṇu. But the ten incarnations mentioned in the Nārāyaṇīyākhyāna do not include Buddha; and Haṁsa is stated to be the first incarnation, whereas the incarnation of Kalki is mentioned immediately after that of Kṛṣṇa (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 339.100). This fact also proves that the Nārāyaṇīyākhyāna is earlier in point of time than the

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Bhāgavata-Purana and the Nārada-Pañcarātra. In the Nārāyaṇīyākhyāna, there is a statement that the Bhāgavata religion, that is, the Nārāyaṇīya religion, was originally founded by the two Ṛṣis Nara and Narayana, who were the incarnations of the Parabrahman; and that when the Ṛṣi Nārada went at their direction to the Śvetadvīpa, the Blessed Lord Himself first preached this religion to him there; the statement in the Nārāyaṇīyākhyāna that the Śvetadvīpa, where the Blessed Lord resided, was in the Kṣīra-samudra, which was stated to be to the north of the Mountain Meru, is consistent with the ancient description of the Cosmos given in the Purāṇas; and no one on our side attaches much importance to it. But the Western Sanskritist Webber has perverted this very story, and started the argument that the Philosophy of Devotion mentioned in the Bhāgavata religion was imported into India from the

Śvetadvīpa, that is to say, from some country outside India; and that in as much as this Philosophy of Devotion was in those days not in vogue in any religion except the Christian religion, the idea of Devotion was picked up by the followers of the Bhāgavata religion from Christian countries. But, there is proof that Panini knew the doctrine of Devotion to Vasudeva, and there are references to the Bhāgavata religion or to the Philosophy of Devotion both in the Buddhistic and Jain religious treatises; and there is no doubt that both Panini and Buddha lived before Christ. Therefore, even Western philosophers have now pronounced this argument of Webber to be without foundation. I have stated above that Devotion, as a part of religion, came into existence in India after the date of the Upaniṣad; which contain Spiritual Knowledge. It is, therefore, beyond doubt that the Bhāgavata religion, which consisted of Devotion to Vasudeva, came into existence after the Upaniṣads, which preached Spiritual Knowledge, and



before Buddha. The only question is how many centuries [1]  
before Buddha that religion

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came into existence; and although it is not possible to answer  
that question with absolute precision, yet, as will appear from

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[1] The word 'bhaktimān' (in Pali, 'bhattimā') appears in the Thera Gāthā (stanza 370); and one Jātaka even contains a reference to Devotion. Besides this, the well-known French Pali scholar Senart, delivered a lecture on the subject of 'The Origin of the Buddhistic religion' in 1909, in which he has clearly said that the Bhāgavata religion existed before the Buddhistic religion, cf:

"No one will claim to derive from Buddhism, Vishnuism or the Yoga. Assuredly Buddhism is the borrower" ... "To sum up, if there had not previously existed a religion made up of the doctrines of Yoga, or Vishnuite legends, of devotion to Vishnu-Krishna, worshipped under the title of Bhāgavata, Buddhism would not have come to birth at all". This essay of Senart has been published in the form of a translation in the issues of the Indian Interpreter, a Missionary quarterly published at Poona, for the months of October 1909 and Jan. 1910; the passages quoted above will be found at pages 177 & 178 of the January issue. Dr. Buhler also has said that "the ancient Bhāgavata, Sātvata or Pañcarātra sect, devoted to the worship of Narayana and his deified teacher Krishna-Devaki-putra, dated from a period long anterior to the rise of the Jainas in the 8th Century"—Indian Antiquary, Vol. XXXII (1894), p. 248. A further detailed exposition of this matter has been made in the sixth part of this Appendix below, to which the reader is referred.

what follows, it is not at all impossible to get a rough idea of its date.

It has been stated in the Gītā that the Bhāgavata religion preached by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Vivasvān was lost before that date (Gī. 4.2); and the philosophy of this religion gives the name 'Vāsudeva' to the Parameśvara, 'Saṁkarṣaṇa' to Jīva, 'Pradyumna' to Manas, and 'Aniruddha' to Ahaṁkāra. Out of these, Vasudeva is the name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa himself; Saṁkarṣaṇa is the name of his elder brother Balarama; and Pradyumna and Aniruddha are names of his son and grandson. Besides, the word 'Sātvata', which is another name for this religion, is also the name of the community, namely, the Yadava community in which Śrī Kṛṣṇa was born. From this it is clear, that this religion was promulgated in the family and the community in which Śrī Kṛṣṇa was born, and that it was preached by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to his dear friend, Arjuna; and the story in the Purāṇas is the same. Besides, as there is also a tradition that the Sātvata community came to an end with the death of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, it was impossible that this religion could have been further promulgated even in the Sātvata community after the death of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It is possible to historically explain the

various names of this religion, by saying that this religion, which was thus promulgated by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, may have been in existence before His time to some extent or other under the name of the 'Nārāyaṇīya' or 'Pañcarātra' religion; and that it later on acquired the name of 'Sātvata', after it was spread in the Sātvata community; and that it came to be called the 'Bhāgavata' religion in the belief that the Blessed Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna were respectively the incarnations of Nara and Narayana. Thus, it is not necessary to imagine that there were three or four different Śrī Kṛṣṇas, and that each of them added a little to the religion; and there is in fact no evidence for coming to such a conclusion. This idea has gained ground on account of the good or bad changes which have taken place in the original religion. But if, though Buddha, Christ, or Mahomed were each one individual by themselves, there came about many good or bad changes in their religions, then there is no occasion in my opinion for believing that there must have been several Śrī Kṛṣṇas, on the ground that the original Bhāgavata religion later on acquired different forms, or -that different ideas later on gained ground regarding Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Whichever religion is taken, it is quite easy and natural that it should change its form in the course of time; and it is not necessary on that account to believe that there were

several Kṛṣṇas, or Buddhas, or Christs, or Mahomedes. [1] Some people – especially

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Western imaginative people – have raised a doubt that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Yādavas, the Pāṇḍavas, or the Bhārātī war, were not historical facts at all, but are mere imaginary personages or stories; and in the opinion of some other persons, the Mahābhārata is nothing but a tremendous metaphysical allegory dealing with the Absolute Self. But, any impartial man will have to come to the conclusion that all such doubts are

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- [1] The life of Śrī Kṛṣṇa includes amorous passages with Gopis (cowherdesses) side by side with prowess, devotion and philosophy and these things are mutually inconsistent. On this ground, many learned people maintain now-a-days that the Śrī Kṛṣṇa of the Mahābhārata was a different person from the Śrī Kṛṣṇa of the Gītā or of Gokul; and this opinion has been accepted by Dr. Bhandarkar in his book 'Vaiṣṇavism, Saivism, and other sects'. But, according to me, such an opinion is incorrect. It may be that the amorous descriptions which we read in the stories about Gopis may have been added afterwards; and it is not necessary on that account to believe that there were various persons bearing the name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; and there is no authority except imagination for doing so. Besides, it is not that stories about Gopis came into vogue for the first time in the days of the Bhāgavata; for, Gopis are referred to in the Buddha-carita (4.14) written by Aśvaghōṣa in the beginning of the Śaka era, as also in the Bālacarita (3.2) written by Bhāsa. I, therefore, consider the opinion of Chintamanrao Vaidya more to the point than that of Dr. Bhandarkar.

without any basis, if he considers the evidence of ancient works. There is no doubt that there is historical authority at the root of these stories. In short, in my opinion, there were not four or five Śrī Kṛṣṇas, but there was only one historical personage of that name. Now, in considering the date of this Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Rao Bahadur Chintamanrao Vaidya has expressed an opinion that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Yādavas, the Pāṇḍavas, and the Bhāratī war, were all synchronous, that is to say, they all existed at the commencement of the Kaliyuga; that according to the method of calculation of time mentioned in the Purāṇas, a period of five thousand years or more has elapsed since then; and that, this is the true date of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. [1] But if one considers the generations of various kings from the Pāṇḍavas upto the Śalivāhana era, which have been described in the Purāṇas, this date is inconsistent with that calculation. Therefore, on the authority of the statement in the Bhāgavata, or in the Viṣṇu-Purāṇa, that "there are 1115 (or 1015) years from the birth of the king Parikṣita upto the coronation of Nanda" (Bhāg. 13.2.26; and Viṣṇu. 4.24.32), historical scholars have now come to the conclusion that the Pāṇḍavas and the Bhāratī war must have been at least 1400 years before the Christian era. Necessarily, this will also be the date of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; and if this date is accepted, it follows that Śrī Kṛṣṇa

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[1] This opinion of Rao Bahadur Chintamanrao Vaidya has been expressed in his English criticism on the Mahābhārata; and he also made the same statement in the lecture delivered by him on the same subject in Poona in 1914 on the occasion of the anniversary of the Deccan College.

promulgated the Bhāgavata religion at least 1400 years before Christ, and about 800 years before Buddha. Some persons have

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raised an objection to this argument, that although Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍavas may be historical personages, yet, a considerable time must have elapsed between the death of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the time when Brahmins gave to a Kṣatriya warrior like Him the position, first of a superman, then of Viṣṇu, and ultimately of the Parabrahman; and that on that account the date of the rise of the Bhāgavata religion cannot be looked upon as the same as the date of the Bhārata war. But, this opinion seems to be worthless. There is a world of difference between the ideas of the modern critics as to who should be deified and who not, and similar ideas of people living three or four thousand years ago (Gī. 10.41); and there are statements in Upaniṣads, which existed prior to the date of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, that a Jñānin himself becomes merged in the Brahman (Br. 4.4.6); and it is clearly stated in the Maitryupaniṣad that Rudra, Viṣṇu, Acyuta and Nārāyaṇa are all Brahman (Maitryu. 7.7). Then, why should there have been delay in the matter of Śrī Kṛṣṇa acquiring the Parabrahman status? If we consider history, Buddha used to call himself 'brahmabhūta' (See Selasutta, 14; Theragāthā, 831); and he was worshipped as a god in his lifetime; and it appears from reliable Buddhistic works that

shortly after his death, he had acquired the position of 'devādhideva', or of the Parabrahman according to Vedic religion; and the same is the case with Christ. It is true that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was not an ascetic like Buddha or Christ, and that the Bhāgavata religion does not support Renunciation. But, there could have been no difficulty on that account in the promulgator of the Bhāgavata religion acquiring the form of a god or of the Brahman from the very beginning, as was acquired by the promulgators of the Buddhist and Christian religions.

Though the date of Śrī Kṛṣṇa has been defined in this way, and , although it is proper and logical to look upon that date as the date of the rise of the Bhāgavata religion, Western scholars are, for quite a different reason, unwilling to do so. Many of these scholars are still of opinion that the Ṛg-Veda is not more ancient than 1500 or perhaps 2000 years before Christ, and therefore, they think it improbable that the devotional Bhāgavata religion could have come into existence about 1400 years before Christ; because the Vedic religious

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literature itself establishes the order that the Ṛg.-Veda was followed by the Yajurveda and the Brahmana treatises, and that the Upaniṣads dealing with Spiritual Knowledge and the

Sāṃkhya philosophy came afterwards, and that the devotional philosophical books came into existence last of all; and if one considers the treatises on the Bhāgavata religion themselves, one also clearly sees that the Spiritual Knowledge of the Upaniṣads, the Sāṃkhya philosophy, Yoga in the form of 'Concentration of the Mind', and other aspects of religion were current long before the advent of the Bhāgavata religion. Even if we economise time considerably, we have to admit that a period of at least ten to twelve hundred years must have elapsed between the date of the Ṛg-Veda and the advent of the Bhāgavata religion, in order to give sufficient time for these various aspects of religion to have come into existence and fully developed themselves; and if it is believed that the Bhāgavata religion was promulgated by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His own time, that is to say, about 1400 years before Christ, then a sufficient period of time is not allowed for the growth of these various aspects of religion according to the opinion of these scholars; because, these scholars place the Ṛg-Veda itself at 1500 to 2000 years before Christ; and on that computation, one has to say that the Bhāgavata religion came into existence about 100 years or at most 500 to 600 years after that date; and therefore, some Western scholars have even come forward to dissociate Śrī Kṛṣṇa from the Bhāgavata religion on this or on some other meaningless excuse, and to say that the Bhāgavata religion must have come into existence after the date of Buddha. But, the references to the Bhāgavata religion, which the Jain and Buddhistic treatises themselves contain,



clearly show that that religion must have been in existence before the date of Buddha; and therefore, Dr. Bühler has said that instead of placing the date of the advent of the Bhāgavata religion after the date of Buddha, the date of the Ṛg-Veda itself must be pushed back, as has been stated by me in my book called Orion. [1] The dates fixed by Western scholars for our Vedic literature on

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some insufficiently sound grounds, are wrong; and the date of the starting-point of the Vedic era cannot be taken at less than 4500 years before Christ, as has been proved in my book Orion on the strength of the phrases in the Vedas, which show the then existing Udagayana (i.e., period during which the Sun seems to travel towards the North ~Translator.); and this conclusion has now been accepted by many Western scholars. When in this way, the date of the Ṛg-Veda has been taken back, a sufficient period of time can be allowed for the growth of all the various aspects of the Vedic religion, and there is no more any necessity for pushing forward the date of the rise of the Bhāgavata religion. As the Brāhmaṇa treatises written after the Ṛg-Veda contain the astronomical calculation of the year starting with the Sun in the Kṛttikā constellation, their date has

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[1] See the Review made by Dr. Bühler of my book Orion in the issue of the Indian Antiquary for September 1894 (Vol. XXIII, pp. 238 – 249).

to be fixed at about 2500 years before Christ, as has been shown by the late Shankara Balkrishna Dikshit in his History of the Indian Astronomical Science (bhāratiya-jyotiḥ-śāstra) written in the Marathi language. But, I do not see this method of fixing the dates of ancient books by considering how the Udagayana was then started being applied to the Upaniṣads. Some scholars have come to the conclusion that none of the Upaniṣads can be more than 400 to 500 years before Buddha, on the ground that the language and construction of devotional Upaniṣads like the Rāmatāpanī, or Yogic Upaniṣads like the Yogatattva, is not archaic. But, if one considers the matter according to the abovementioned method of calculation of time, it will be seen that such a conclusion is wrong. It is true that the dates of all the Upaniṣads cannot be fixed according to the astronomical method of calculation; yet, this method is very useful for fixing the date of the principal Upaniṣads. Prof. Max Müller [1] has said that, from the linguistic point of view, the Maitryupaniṣad is more ancient than Pāṇinī, because, we find in this Upaniṣad, many compounds of words, used in a chanda, which had gone out of vogue at the date of Panini, but which are to be found in the Maitrāyaṇī Saṁhitā. But the Maitrāyaṇyupaniṣad is not the very first nor a very ancient Upaniṣad. Not only has harmony been established between

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[1] See Sacred Books of the East Series Vol. XV Intro pp. xlviil-iii.

Knowledge of the Brahman and Sāṃkhya philosophy in the Maitrāyaṇyupaniṣad, but in many places, phrases or even stanzas from the Chāndogya, Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Taittirīya, Katha, and Īśāvāsya are seen being taken as authorities. The actual names of these Upaniṣads are not mentioned in the Maitryupaniṣad; but as, in quoting these phrases, words implying quotation such as 'evam hyāha' or 'uktaṃ ca' (i.e., 'so it is said') are placed before the quotations, there is no doubt that these quotations are taken from some other book, and are not written by the writer of the Maitryupaniṣad; and one can easily determine which Upaniṣad has been quoted from, by a reference to these other Upaniṣads. Now, where the description of the Brahman in the shape of 'kāla' (Time) or 'saṃvatsara' (Year) is made in the Maitryupaniṣad (Maitryu. 6.14), it is stated that: "the Dakṣiṇāyana (i.e., when the Sun seems to travel towards the South ~Translator.) lasts from the day when the Sun enters to Maghā constellation until it reaches the centre-point of the Śraviṣṭhā, that is, the Dhaniṣṭhā constellation (cf. "maghādyam śraviṣṭhārdham"); and that the Uttarāyaṇa (or Udagayana, during which the Sun seems to travel towards the North ~Translator.) used to be from the beginning of the Sārpa, that is, the Āśleṣā constellation, in an inverse order upto the centre-point of the Dhaniṣṭhā constellation, that is, counting backwards as Āśleṣā, Puṣya, etc.". It is quite clear that these expressions, which

show the method of calculation of the Udagayana must have been used with reference to the period of the Udagayana which was then in vogue; and in this way, the date of that Upaniṣad can easily be mathematically calculated. But no one seems to have considered the matter from this point of view. This state of the Udagayana, referred to in the Maitryupaniṣad, is earlier than the state of the Udagayana referred to in the Vedāṅga-Jyotiṣa; because, it is clearly stated in the Vedāṅga-Jyotiṣa that the commencement of the Udagayana is from the beginning of the Dhaniṣṭhā constellation, whereas in the Maitryupaniṣad, the commencement is from the middle of the Dhaniṣṭhā. There is a difference of opinion as to whether the term 'ardham' in the phrase 'śraviṣṭhārdham' is to be interpreted as meaning 'exactly half or 'somewhere between Dhaniṣṭhā and Śatatārakā'. Whatever may be the

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case, there is no doubt about the fact that the state of the Udagayana mentioned in the Maitryupaniṣad is earlier in point of time than that mentioned in the Vedāṅga-Jyotiṣa. Therefore, it must be said that the Udagayana at the date of the Vedāṅga-Jyotiṣa was about half a constellation behind the Udagayana at the date of the Maitryupaniṣad. It is proved by astronomical calculations that the state of the Udagayana mentioned in the Vedāṅga-Jyotiṣa existed about 1200 to 1400

years before Christ; [1] and in as much as the Udagayana takes about 480 years to recede by half a constellation, it follows by mathematical calculation that the Maitryupaniṣad must have been written somewhere between 1880 to 1680 years before Christ. At any rate, there is no doubt that this Upaniṣad was previous in point of time than the Vedāṅga-Jyotiṣa. It need not, therefore, be said that the Chāndogya and other Upaniṣads, from which quotations have been taken into the Maitryupaniṣad, are still earlier in point of time. The date of the Ṛg-Veda being in this way fixed at 4500 years before Christ, that of the Brahmanas, dealing with sacrificial ritual, being fixed at about 2500 years before Christ, and that of the Chāndogya and other Upaniṣads dealing with Spiritual Knowledge being fixed at about 1600 years before Christ, the reason for which Western scholars bring forward the date of the Bhāgavata religion ceases to exist, and there is no more any difficulty in the way of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the Bhāgavata religion being tied together by the cord of synchrony, like a cow and a calf; and then, this date also becomes consistent with the state of things mentioned in Buddhistic treatises, or established by other historical evidence. The Vedic age comes to an end, and the Sūtras and the Smṛtis begin, at about this time.

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[1] I have discussed the date of the Vedāṅga-Jyotiṣa in my work Orion in English; the late Shankara Balkrishna Diksit has also done so in his book called 'Historical Survey of the Bhāratīya-Jyotiḥ Śāstra' (pp. 87 to 94 and 127 to 139). The date of Vedic treatises according to the Udagayana, has been considered in the same place.

The above-mentioned calculation of time proves beyond doubt that the Bhāgavata religion came into existence about

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1400 years before Christ, that is to say, about 700 to 800 years before Buddha. This age is very ancient; yet, the Path of Action mentioned in the Brāhmaṇa-treatises is still more ancient, and, as has been stated above, the Spiritual Knowledge contained in the (Upaniṣads and in Sāṃkhya philosophy was fully in vogue long before the promulgation of the Bhāgavata religion. It is in my opinion, entirely wrong to imagine that a clever Jñānin like Śrī Kṛṣṇa would have promulgated His religion at such a time without reference to this Spiritual Knowledge or these aspects of Religion; and that, even if He had done so, it would have become acceptable to the Rājārṣis and Brahmarṣis of those days or found circulation among the people. As the Jews to whom Christ first preached His religion, were not acquainted with religious philosophy at the time. He had no need to harmonise His own religion with any religious philosophy. It was enough for Him to show that His Philosophy of Devotion was only a continuation of the Ritualistic religion described in the Old Testament of the Bible; and that was all He attempted to do. But, when one compares this history of the Christian religion with the Bhāgavata religion from the

historical point of view, one must not forget that the people to whom the Bhāgavata religion was preached were, at the time at which it was preached, fully conversant, not only with the Path of Action, but also with the Vedantic Knowledge of the Brahman and the Kapila Sāṃkhya philosophy, and that they had by that time also learnt to harmonise those three religion. It would have been most unreasonable to ask such people to put on the shelf their Ritualistic religion, or the Spiritual Knowledge derived from the Upaniṣads, or Sāṃkhya philosophy, and to accept the Bhāgavata religion merely by faith. Unless the Bhāgavata religion satisfactorily answered such questions as, 'what is the result of the sacrificial ritual described in the Vedic treatises and in vogue at the time?', 'whether the Spiritual Knowledge mentioned in the Upaniṣads or in Sāṃkhya philosophy is futile?' or, 'whether the Philosophy of Devotion can be harmonised with Yoga in the shape of Concentration of the Mind?', which questions would naturally arise, it would have been impossible for that religion to gain any ground at all. It, therefore, follows

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logically that, it was necessary to discuss all these matters, to start with, in dealing with the Bhāgavata religion; and the same conclusion is emphasised, if one considers the Nārāyaṇīyopākhyāna included in the Mahābhārata. In this Ākhyāna, the Spiritual Knowledge of the Upaniṣads and the

Sāṃkhya theory of the Perishable and the Imperishable have both been harmonised with the Bhāgavata religion; and it is clearly stated that: "it is called the 'Pañcarātra' religion because the four Vedas and Sāṃkhya and Yoga are all included in it" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 339.107); and that "all these (philosophies) including the Vedas and the Āraṇyakas (naturally also, including the Upaniṣads) are all parts of each other" (Śān. 348.82). Although this explanation of the meaning of the word 'Pañcarātra' may not be grammatically correct, yet, it clearly shows that the Bhāgavata religion had, already to start with, harmonised all kinds of philosophies. Still, harmonising the Philosophy of Devotion with other aspects of religion is also not any important part of the Bhāgavata religion. It is not that the religious principle of Devotion was first enunciated in the Bhāgavata religion. Worship of Rudra or of Viṣṇu in some form or other had been started before the advent of the Bhāgavata religion; and it becomes clear from the phrases quoted above from the Maitryupaniṣad (Maitryu. 7.7), that the idea that any object of worship whatsoever is a symbol, or some kind of form of the Brahman, had also previously come into existence. It is true that the Bhāgavata religion has taken Vasudeva as an object of worship instead of Rudra etc.; but at the same time, it is admitted both in the Gītā and also in the Nārāyaṇīyopākhyāna, that whatever may be the object of worship, the worship reaches one and the same Bhagavanta, and that Rudra and Bhagavāna are not two. (Gī. 9.23; Ma. Bhā. Śān. 341. 20 – 26). Therefore, one cannot



consider the worship of Vasudeva as the principal aspect of the Bhāgavata religion. The Sātvata community by which the Bhāgavata religion was observed, produced Sātyaki and other warriors, as also devotees of the Blessed Lord like Bhīṣma and Arjuna, and also Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who engaged and caused others to be engaged in numerous activities, involving personal prowess. Therefore, the most important teaching of the original Bhāgavata religion was, that the illustration of these persons should be copied by other devotees

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of the Blessed Lord, who should perform worldly activities like warfare, etc., which were then in vogue, according to the arrangement of the four castes. It is not that those times did not produce persons with a renounced frame of mind, who had adopted the principle of Devotion as a result of intense renunciation, and given up worldly life; but that was not the principal element of the Bhāgavata religion of the Sātvatas or of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The sum and substance of the advice of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is, that after the Devotee of the Blessed Lord has acquired the Knowledge of the Parameśvara, by means of Devotion, he must, like the Parameśvara, exert himself for the maintenance, and upkeep of the world. Already at the time of the Upaniṣads, Janaka and others had laid it down that even, those people, who had Realised the Brahman, might without any difficulty take part in Desireless Action. But in those days, the

Philosophy of Devotion had not entered their doctrine; and whether or not to perform worldly Action after the Acquisition of Knowledge was in those days, considered a matter of personal volition only (Ve. Sū. 3.4.15). The Bhāgavata religion went beyond this and laid down that Desireless Energism (naiṣkarmya) was better than Total Renunciation; and it brought about a proper fusion of Energism, not only with Spiritual Knowledge, but also with Devotion. This is the most important achievement of the Bhāgavata religion in the history of the Vedic religion, and is something which is different from what was done by the Smārta religion. The original promulgators of this religion, namely the Nara and Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣis, also engaged in Desireless Energism in this, way; and- it is stated in one place in the Mahābhārata that everyone must do what was done by them (Ma. Bhā. Udyo. 48.21, 22); and in the Nārāyaṇīyākhyāna, the characteristic feature of this religion is clearly defined as "pravṛtti lakṣaṇaś caiva dharmo nārāyaṇātmakaḥ" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 347. 81), i.e., "the Narayana or Bhāgavata religion is Energistic or Activistic". This principle of Desireless Action of the Nārāyaṇīya or the Bhāgavata religion is known as 'naiṣkarmya';. and this was the most important aspect of the original Bhāgavata religion. But later on in course of time, this principle lost importance, and Devotion to Vāsudeva combined with apathy

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towards the world came to be looked upon as the important part of this religion, as is apparent from the Bhāgavata; and in the Nārada-Pañcarātra, mantras and tantras are included in the Bhāgavata religion along with the Philosophy of Devotion. Yet, it is patent from the Bhāgavata itself, that these are not the fundamental aspects of this religion; because, wherever there has been occasion in the Bhāgavata to refer to the Sātvata or the Nārāyaṇīya religion, it is stated that the religion of the Sātvatas or of Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi (that is, the Bhāgavata religion) is 'of the nature of naiṣkarmya' (Bhāg. 1.3.8 and 11.4.6); and it is stated that it had become necessary to preach the Devotional Bhāgavata-Purāṇa (Bhāg. 1.5.12), because due importance had not been given to Devotion in the 'naiṣkarmya' religion. This proves beyond any doubt that the original Bhāgavata religion was based on naiṣkarmya or Desireless Action, and that later on its form was changed in the course of time, and Devotion became the principal factor in it. I have already dealt above in the Gītā-Rahasya with the other various historical questions, namely, (i) what was the difference between the original Bhāgavata religion, which maintained a permanent fusion between Spiritual Knowledge, Devotion, and Prowess, and the path prescribed by the Smṛtis in the shape of

the arrangement of the various stages of life; (ii) how, as a result of the growth of the purely ascetic Jain and Buddhist religions, the Karma-Yoga in the Energistic Bhāgavata religion lost ground, and it (the Bhāgavata religion) acquired its new form of Renunciation with Devotion; and (iii) how the Vedic sects which came into existence after the fall of Buddhism gave to the Bhagavadgītā itself either a renunciatory, or a purely Devotional, or a Qualified-Monistic (viśiṣṭādvaita) form. I shall, therefore, not repeat the same subject-matter here.

Prom the short dissertation made above, my readers will have seen (i) when, the Bhāgavata religion first came into prominence in the ancient course of the "Vedic religion, (ii) how, although it was Energistic in the beginning, it later on became devotional; and (iii) how, still later on, in the time of Rāmānujācārya, it acquired the form of Qualified-Monism. The most ancient of these various forms of the Bhāgavata religion, that is to say, the Desireless Activistic form, is the form of the Gītā-

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religion. I shall now briefly explain what inferences can be drawn about the date of this original Gītā . Although the time of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and of the Bhāratī war may be the same, that is to say, about 1400 years before the Christian era, yet, it cannot

be said that the original Gītā and the original Bhārata, which are the two principal treatises dealing with the Bhāgavata religion, were also written at the same time. Whatever religious sect may come into existence, literature on it does not come into existence immediately; and the same argument applies to the Bhārata and to the Gītā. There is a story recited at the commencement of the present Mahābhārata, that after the Bhārataī war was over, Janamejaya, the great-grandson of the Pāṇḍavas made a sacrifice of serpents; that, Vaiśampāyana recited to him for the first time the whole of the Bhārata including the Gītā; and that, when it had been recited by Sauti to Śaunaka, the Bhārata was thereafter promulgated. It is quite clear that some period of time must have elapsed between the date when the Bhārata came to be preached by Sauti and other preachers, and the date when it acquired its present tangible literary form; but there is now no means by which to definitely decide what that period of time was. Still, if one draws the conclusion that the archaic original epic-formed Bhārata came to be written within 500 years after the Bhārataī war, that will not be too daring a surmise; because, Buddhistic treatises were written in even a shorter period of time .after the death of Buddha. In writing an archaic epic, it is not enough to merely describe in it the feats of the principal hero; but it is necessary to say whether or not what was done by the hero was right. Nay, that this is possibly one of the most important parts of an archaic epic, appears from other such epics, in literatures other than the Sanskrit literature from the



modern point of view, this justification of the deeds of the heroes must be made on the pure basis of Ethics. But, in ancient times, there was no difference between Religion and Ethics; and, therefore, there was no way in which to make this justification other than from the point of view of Religion; and then, as need not be said, it was necessary to justify their deeds on the basis of that very Bhāgavata religion, which had been promulgated 'by the heroes in the Bhārata, or which was acceptable to them.

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But another reason for doing so was that, it was not possible to- fully justify the deeds or prowess of the heroes of the Mahābhārata on the basis of the religious principles of other religious paths, as all the other Vedic religious paths, besides the Bhāgavata religion, which were then in vogue, were more or less renunciatory. Therefore, it became necessary to expound the Energistic Bhāgavata religion in the original epic Bhārata. This was done in the original Gītā; and although it might not have been the first- treatise to categorically expound the original form of the Bhāgavata religion, yet, it is one of the principal books on that religion; and there seems to be no reason why its date should not be roughly fixed at about 900 years before Christ. Since the Gītā is, at any rate, the most important, if not the first treatise on the Bhāgavata religion, it was necessary to show that the Desireless Karma-Yoga

promulgated by it was not inconsistent with the other religious paths then in vogue, namely, the Karma-kāṇḍa, the Spiritual Knowledge in the Upaniṣads, the Sāṃkhya philosophy, the Yoga philosophy dealing with 'Concentration of the Mind', and the Philosophy of Devotion; and I may even say that that was the principal object of this book. Some persons raise the doubt that, the systematic sciences of Vedānta and Mīmāṃsā could not have been dealt with in the original Gītā. as they came into existence only at a later date; and that, therefore, Vedānta must have been subsequently interpolated, into the Gītā. But, although the systematic sciences of Vedānta and Mīmāṃsā may have come into existence later on,, yet, as has been stated above, the subject-matter dealt with by them was very ancient. Therefore, there is no difficulty, from the point of view of time, in the way of these subjects having appeared in the original Gītā, Nevertheless, I do not say that no change was made in the original Gītā , when the original Bhārata became the Mahābhārata. History shows us that whatever religion is taken, sub-sects come into existence in it in course of time, as a result of differences of opinion; and the same. law applies to the Bhāgavata religion. It is clearly stated in- 'the Nārāyaṇīyopākhyāna itself, that the Bhāgavata religion was considered by some as four-folded (catur-vyūha), that is,, made up of the four aspects of Vasudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha; and that it was considered by

others as three-folded, and by others as two-folded, and by others again as single-folded (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 348.57); and some such other differences may also have arisen later on. At the same time, the Spiritual Knowledge contained in the Upaniṣads and the Sāṃkhya philosophy were being further developed. Therefore, if there was any dis-arrangement in the original Gītā, it would not have been unnatural, or inconsistent with the purpose of the original Gītā, for the writer of the new Bhārata to see that defect was removed, and that the Bhāgavata religion was made consistent with the growing knowledge of the Piṇḍa and the Brahmāṇḍa; and I have, therefore, shown in the Part of this Appendix headed 'the Gītā and the Brahma-Sūtras' above, that the present Gītā contains, on that account, a reference to the Brahma-Sūtras. There might also have been other similar differences in the original Gītā. Still, it was not possible that many such changes should be made in the original Gītā. It does not appear that the authority of the Gītā was acquired -by it after the date of the Mahābhārata. I have stated above .that the Brahma-Sūtras themselves have taken the Gītā as authoritative by using the word 'Smṛti'. If a material change had been made in the original Gītā, when the original Bhārata was changed into the Mahābhārata, this authoritativeness of the Gītā would certainly have suffered. But instead of that, its authority has, on the other hand, increased. We have, therefore, to draw the inference that whatever changes were made in the original

Gītā, they were not material, and that the changes which were made, were made in such a way as to promote and carry out its original import. It is clear from the various Gītās which have been mentioned in the different Purāṇas on the basis of the present Bhagavadgītā, that the form which it then acquired was a permanent form, and that there were no further changes in it. Because, if the Gītā had not become fully authoritative, that is to say, invariable, at least some centuries before the date of the most ancient of these Purāṇas, it would not have been possible to conceive the idea of including . other Gītās on the basis of this Gītā in those Purāṇas. And the attempts made by various doctrine-supporting commentators to stretch the meanings of the words in one and the same Gītā in order to show

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that the purport of the Gītā was consistent with their own doctrines, would also in that case not have become necessary. A doubt is raised by some scholars that many changes must have been made from time to time in the Gītā in the present Mahābhārata, on the ground that the present Gītā contains many mutually contradictory doctrines. But, I have shown above that these inconsistencies are not substantial, and that this mental confusion is due to people not having properly understood the previous and subsequent Vedic methods of expounding religion. In short, it will be seen from the above

exposition that (i) the original Bhārata and the original Gītā , which propounded the original Bhāgavata religion, were written about 500 years after the rise of the Bhāgavata religion, which harmonised the various ancient Vedic aspects of religion, and specially supported the Path of Energism, that is to say, about 900 years before Christ; that (ii) though, when the Bhārata was changed into the Mahābhārata, there might have been some minor improvements in the original Gītā, which would be promotive of its purport, yet, the form of the original Gītā was not then substantially changed; and that (iii) after the present Gītā had been included in the present Mahābhārata, there was no subsequent change in it, nor was it possible that any such change should take place. The fixing of the form and the date of the original Gītā and the original Bhārata have been made by me approximately and in a liberal way, because that amount of information which would be necessary for fixing those matters definitely is not now available. But, the same is not the case with the present Mahābhārata and the present Gītā; and there are ways available for fixing their respective dates. I have, therefore, discussed that matter separately in the next part of this Appendix. My readers must, however, bear it in mind that the present Gītā and the present Mahābhārata, that is to say, the forms in which the Gītā and the Mahābhārata are now found by us, after changes have taken place in their respective forms in course of time, are not the original forms of those respective books.

## **PART V. – THE DATE OF THE PRESENT GĪTĀ.**

I have proved above in a general way that the Bhagavadgītā. is the most important work dealing with the Bhāgavata religion; that this Bhāgavata religion came into existence about 1400 years before Christ; and that the original Gītā must have come into existence some centuries after that; and I have also said that though the original Bhāgavata religion favoured Desireless Action, it gradually assumed a Devotional form, and ultimately came to include the principles of Qualified-Monism (viśiṣṭādvaita). More information about the original Gītā or the original Bhāgavata religion is not available, at least at the present day; and the same was the case with the present Mahābhārata and the present Gītā about 50 years ago. But, as a result of the efforts of Dr. Bhandarkar, the late Mr. Kashinathpant Telang, the late Mr. Shankar Balkrishna Dikshit, and Rao Bahadur Chintamanrao Vaidya, many proofs have now. become available for fixing the data of the present Bhārata and the present Gītā; and very recently, the late Mr. Tryambak Gurunath Kale has also adduced some more proofs. This part of the Appendix has been briefly made up by me by

putting together all these matters and adding to them whatever addition was necessary in my opinion. In the beginning of this Appendix I have shown with proofs that the present Mahābhārata and the present Gītā must have been written by one and the same hand. When these two treatises are accepted as being written by the same hand, and therefore necessarily contemporaneous, one can easily fix the date of the Gītā by fixing the date of the Mahābhārata. I have, therefore, in this- part of the Appendix mentioned first the various important proofs which are now available for fixing the date of the present. Mahābhārata, and then shown independently those proofs, which are useful for fixing the date of the present Gītā. I have followed this course in order that the fixing of the date of the Gītā should not suffer, if someone finds the proofs adduced by me for fixing the date of the Mahābhārata not sufficiently definite.

### **THE FIXING OF THE DATE OF THE MAHĀBHĀRATA**

The Mahābhārata is an extremely extensive work; and it is stated in that book itself, that it consists of one hundred

thousand stanzas. But Rao Bahadur Vaidya has shown in the first Appendix to his criticism in English on the Mahābhārata, that the present edition of the Mahābhārata consists of less than that number of stanzas, and that we do not arrive at that total, even by adding the Harivaṁśa to it. [1] Nevertheless, there is no reason for not accepting the position that the larger book, which came into existence when the Bhārata became the Mahābhārata, must have been more or less the same as the present edition of the Mahābhārata. I have stated above that this Mahābhārata makes a mention of the Nirukta of Yāska and of Manu-Samhita, and that the Gītā even mentions the Brahma-Sūtras. The other proofs which are available for fixing the date of the Mahābhārata are as follows:—

(1) This book of eighteen parvas and the Harivaṁśa, found their way into the Java and Bali Islands before Saka 400 to 500; and it has been translated into the ancient language of those places known as 'Kavi'; and the following eight parvas of that translation, namely, the Ādi, Virāṭa, Udyoga, Bhīṣma, Āśramavāsī, Musala, Prāṣṭhānika, and Svargārohaṇa parvas are now available; and some of them have been printed. But, although the translation has been made into the Kavi language, the original Sanskrit stanzas from the Mahābhārata have been retained in many places. I have considered some of

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[1] "The Mahābhārata, a Criticism" p. 185. Wherever this criticism of Rao Bahadur Vaidya on the Mahābhārata has been referred to, this book is meant.



the stanzas from the Udyogaparva. All these stanzas can be found here and there in the chapters of the Udyogaparva of the Calcutta edition of the present Mahābhārata. This proves that the Mahābhārata of a hundred thousand stanzas had become authoritative in India at least 200 years before Saka 400; because, it would otherwise not have been necessary at all to take it into the Java and Bali Islands. The Mahābhārata has also been translated into the Tibetan language, but, that is later in point of time than this, [1]

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(2) There is now available a stone inscription of the Gupta kings made in Cedi Samvat 197, that is to say, the 367th year of the Śaka era, which contains a clear reference that the Mahābhārata was a book of a hundred thousand verses; and this reference clearly proves that the Mahābhārata must have been in existence at least 100 to 200 years before Śaka 367. [2]

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- [1] See the reference to the Mahābhārata of the Java Island at pp. 32-38 of the issue of the Modern Review for July 1914. A reference to the Mahābhārata in the Tibetan language has been made in Rockhill's Life of the Buddha, p. 228, Note I.
- [2] This stone inscription has been fully reproduced at page 134 of the third part of the book called Inscriptionum Indicarum, and it has been referred to by the late Mr. Shankar Balkrishna Dikshit in his Bhāratiya Jyotiḥ-Śāstra at page 108.

(3) Many of the dramas of Bhāsa, which have now been published, have been written on the basis of certain chapters of the Mahābhārata. It, therefore, follows that the Mahābhārata was then available and was looked upon as authoritative. The drama, Bālarita of Bhāsa contains a reference to the incidents of the youth of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and to Gopis. Therefore, we have to say that the Harivaṁśa must also then have been in existence. There is no doubt that Bhāsa lived before Kālidāsa. Tanjore Ganapati Shastri, who has edited the dramas of Bhāsa, has stated in his preface to the drama that Bhāsa lived even before Cāṇakya; because, a stanza found in the dramas of Bhāsa, is to be found in the Artha-Śāstra of Cāṇakya; and it is clearly stated in that place that that stanza is a quotation. But although this period of time is not definite, yet, Bhāsa can certainly not be placed in my opinion later than the second or third century A. D.

(4) It is established from Buddhistic treatises, that a Buddhist poet named Aśvaghoṣa lived at the beginning of the Śalivāhana era. This Aśvaghoṣa wrote two epics in Sanskrit on the Buddhistic religion, called Buddhacarita and Saundarānanda. In both these epics, stories from the Bhārata have been referred to. There is besides a book in the shape of a lecture on the Vajrasūcikopaniṣad which is attributed to Aśvaghoṣa; or it may even be said that this Vajrasūci Upaniṣad was written by him. Prof. Webber published this book in Germany in 1860, and it contains the stanzas "saptavyādkā daśārṇeṣu" etc. from the Śrāddha-Māhātmya, in the

Harivaṁśa (Hari. 24.20 and 21); and some other stanzas from the Mahābhārata itself (such as, Ma.

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Bhā. Śān. 261.17). This clearly proves that the present Mahābhārata of a hundred thousand stanzas including the Harivaṁśa was in existence before the commencement of the Saka era.

(5) The Bhārata and the Mahābhārata have been independently referred to in the Āśvalāyana-Gṛhya-Sūtra (3. 4. 4), and a stanza from the Yayāti Upākhyāna of the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Ā. 78.10) appears in one place in the Baudhāyana-Dharma-Sūtra (2.2.26). Bühler says that this one stanza is not sufficient proof for saying that the Mahābhārata existed before Baudhāyana [1]; but this objection is groundless, because the Gṛhyaśeṣa-Sūtra of Baudhāyana contains a reference to the Viṣṇu-Sahasranāma (Bau. Gr. Śe. 1 22.8); and further on, in the same Sūtra (2. 22. 9), the stanza "patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyaṁ" etc. from the Gītā (Gī. 9.26) has been mentioned. These references in the Baudhāyana-Sūtra were first pointed out by the late Mr. Tryambak Gurunath Kale [2]; and they prove that the objection raised by Prof. Bühler is groundless, and that both Āśvalāyana and

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[1] Sacred Books of the East. Vol. XIV. Intro, p. xli

Baudhāyana were conversant with the Mahābhārata. Bühler has established on other evidence that Baudhāyana must have lived about 400 years before Christ.

(6) Where the incarnations of Viṣṇu have been mentioned in the Mahābhārata itself, there is no reference to Buddha; and where the ten incarnations are mentioned in the Nārāyaṇīyopākhyāna (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 339. 100), the Haṁsa is taken as the first incarnation, and Kalki is placed immediately after Kṛṣṇa to make up the total of ten. Yet, where the future state of the Kali-Yuga is referred to in the Vanaparva, it is stated that: – "eḍūkacinhā pṛthivī na devagr̥ha-bhūṣitā", i.e., "on the earth,, there will be 'eḍūka' instead of temples of gods" (Ma. Bhā, Vana. 190. 68). An eḍūka is a pillar, tower, and other edifice, erected as a memorial over some buried hair, tooth etc. of Buddha; and it is now-a-days known as 'ḍāgobā'. 'ḍāgobā' is a corruption from the Sanskrit word 'dhātu-garbha' (in Pali, ḍāgobā),

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[2] The whole of the essay of the late Mr. Tryambak Gurunath Kale has been published in The Vedic Magazine and Gurukul Samachar Vol. VII Nos. 6,7, pp. 528-532. There the name of the writer is. wrongly mentioned as 'Prof. Kale'.

and 'dhātu' means the 'memento which is buried'. In Ceylon and in Burma there is many a ḍāgobā, in numerous places. This shows that the Mahābhārata must have been written after the date of Buddha, but before he was looked upon as an incarnation. The words 'Buddha' and 'Prati-Buddha' occur in various places in the Mahābhārata (Śān. 194.58; 307.47; 343.52). But there the words only mean a Jñānin, a Knower, or a Sthitaprajña. That word does not seem to have been taken from the Buddhist religion; nay, there is good reason for believing that the Buddhists themselves have taken these words from the Vedic religion.

(7) In the Mahābhārata, the enumeration of constellations does not start with Asvini, but with Kṛttikā. (Ma. Bhā. Anu. 64 and 89); and the zodiacal signs Meṣa, Vṛṣabha, etc., are nowhere mentioned. This is a matter of very great importance from the point of view of the date of the Mahābhārata; because, one can easily draw the inference from this fact that the Mahābhārata must have been written before the zodiacal signs Meṣa, Vṛṣabha etc. were known in India as a result of contact with the Greeks, that is to say, before the date of Alexander. But a still more important fact is the enumeration of the constellations starting with Śravaṇa. It is stated in the Anugītā that Viśvāmitra started the enumeration of the constellations with Śravaṇa (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 44.2, and Ādi 71.34). That has been interpreted by commentators as showing that the Uttarāyaṇa then started with the Śravaṇa constellation, and no other interpretation is proper. At the

date of the Vedāṅga-Jyotiṣa, the Uttarāyaṇa used to start with the Sun in the Dhaniṣṭhā. constellation. According to astronomical calculations, the date when the Uttarāyaṇa should start with the Sun in the Dhaniṣṭhā constellation comes to about 1500 years before the Saka era; and according to astronomical calculations, it takes about a thousand years for the Uttarāyaṇa to start one constellation earlier.. According to this calculation, the date when the Uttarāyaṇa ought to start with the Sun in the Śravaṇa constellation comes to about 500 years before the Saka era. Therefore, it can be proved mathematically that the present Mahābhārata must have been written about 500 years before the Saka era. The late Mr. Shankar Balkrishna Dikshit has drawn the same conclusion in his Bhāratīya Jyotiḥ-Śāstra.

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(Bhā. Jyo. pp. 87 – 90, 111 and 147). The important feature of this evidence is that the date of the present Mahābhārata cannot be taken to much more than 500 years before the Śaka era.

(8) Rao Bahadur Vaidya has in his criticism in English on (the Mahābhārata shown that the Greek ambassador named Megasthenes, at the Court of Chandragupta (320 B. C.), knew some of the stories in the Mahābhārata. The works of Megasthenes are not now available in their entirety. But

extracts made from them by other persons have been collected together, and were first published in German; and they have been translated into English by M'Crindle. It is stated in this book, (pp. 200 – 205), that the Heracles mentioned by Megasthenes was none but Śrī Kṛṣṇa; and that at the date of Megasthenes, this Śrī Kṛṣṇa, used to be worshipped by the Śauraseni people, and that these Śauraseni people used to live in Muttra. [1] It is also stated there that Heracles was the fifteenth in line of descent from Dionisus; and there is a statement even in the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Anu. 147.25 – 33) that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was fifteenth in line of descent from Dakṣa Prajapati. Also the descriptions given by Megasthenes (p. 94)

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- [1] See M'Crindle's Ancient India – Megasthenes and Arrian pp. 200- 205. This statement of Megasthenes has been fortified in a very curious way by a recent discovery. The Progress Report of the Archaeological Department of the Bombay Government for the year 1914 has been recently published. It reproduces the inscription on a garuḍadhvaja (eagle monolith) known as 'Khāmbabābā' at Besanagar near Bhilsā in the Gwalior State In that inscription, it is stated that a Greek or yavana named Heliodorus who had been converted to Hinduism, had constructed a temple to Vāsudeva in front of that monolith; and that this Heliodorus was the ambassador sent by the Greek king Antioledes who ruled at Takṣaśilā, to the Court of the king Bhagabhadra ruling at Bhilsā. It has now been established from the coins of the king Antioledes, that he was ruling in 140 B. C. This, therefore, clearly establishes not only that the worship of Vasudeva was already in vogue at this time, but also that yavanas had started building temples to Vasudeva. I have stated above that not only Megasthenes, but also Pāṇinī knew of the worship of Vāsudeva.

of the karṇa-prāvaraṇa, ekapāda (one-footed ~Translator.),  
lalāṭākṣa (cyclops, with one eye

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only in the forehead~Translator.) and other strange people,  
and of ants (pipīlikā) who bring up gold are also to be found in  
the Mahābhārata (Ma, Bhā. Sabhā. 51 and 52). These and  
other- facts clearly prove that not only the Mahābhārata but  
also the history of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa were  
in Vogue already at the date of Megasthenes.

When it is remembered that all the proofs mentioned above  
are not mutually inter-dependent but are independent, it  
becomes clear beyond doubt that the present Mahābhārata  
was in vogue at least about 500 years before the Saka era. It is  
quite likely that some stanzas have been interpolated into or  
deleted from the Mahābhārata after that date. But we are now  
dealing with the question not of any particular stanzas but of  
the principal book itself; and it is quite clear that this book  
must have been written at least 500 years before the Saka era.  
I have shown at the commencement of this Appendix that the  
Gītā is a part of the Mahābhārata, and has not been  
interpolated into it. subsequently; therefore, the Gītā must be  
considered to be of the same date. The original Gītā may have  
been earlier than this; because, as has been shown in the



fourth part of this Appendix, the tradition of the original Gītā has to be- taken much further back. But, whatever may be said, it is absolutely clear that its date cannot be placed after the date of the Mahābhārata. This fact is established not merely by the evidence mentioned above; for, there is also independent evidence about it, which I shall now place before my readers.

### THE FIXING OF THE DATE OF THE GĪTĀ

The evidence mentioned above does not contain a clear reference by name to the Gītā . Its date has been fixed there by reference to the Mahābhārata. I shall now set out the evidence which contains a clear reference to the Gītā. But before I do so, it must be mentioned that the late Mr. Telang has fixed the date of the Gītā as being before Āpastamba, that is to say, at least 300 years before Christ; and Dr. Bhandarkar has in his book in English named Vaiṣṇavism, Activism, and other sects accepted - the same opinion. [1] Prof. Garbe is of the opinion that the date

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[1] See Telang's Bhagavadgītā, S. B. E. Vol. VIII Intro pp. 21 and 34; Dr. Bhandarkar's Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism, and other sects, p. 13;; Dr. Garbe's Die Bhagavadgītā p. 64.

fixed by Mr. Telang is not correct, and that the original Gītā must have been written about 200 years before Christ, and that it was revised in the second century after Christ. But it will be seen that the opinion of Dr. Garbe is incorrect for the following reasons:—

(1) The Śāṃkarabhāṣya is the most ancient among the criticisms and commentaries on the Gītā which are now available. Śrī Śāṃkarācārya has also written a commentary on the Sanatsujātīya chapter of the Mahābhārata; and he has in many places in his works taken the statements from the Anugītā, the Manu-Bṛhaspati conversation, and the Śukānupraśna in the Mahābhārata as authoritative. It is, therefore, clear that in his times, the Mahābhārata and the Gītā, used to be looked upon as authoritative. The birth of Śrī Śāṃkarācārya is fixed at Saka 710 on the authority of a sectarian stanza, .as has been proved by Prof. Kashinath Bapu Phatak. But in my opinion this date must be taken back by another hundred years; because, it is stated in the book named Darśana-Prakāśa, which belongs to the Mahānubhāva sect, that Śrī Śāṃkarācārya entered the cave in the year "yugma payodhi rasanvita śāke", that is, in Śaka 643 [1]; and at that time, the Ācārya was only 32 years

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[1] This is a peculiar Sanskrit way of describing dates; yugma means two; payodhi means 'ocean', of which there were believed to "be four; and rasa means 'taste', of which there are six kinds; and those digits are to be read from right to left; thus we get the Śaka year 642. ~Translator.

old. Therefore, the date of his birth is proved to be Śaka 610. In my opinion, this date is more correct than the date fixed by Prof. Phatak. But I cannot deal with that question in detail here. In the Śāṃkarabhāṣya on the Gītā, many previous commentators are referred to; and Śāṃkarācārya has in the very beginning of that commentary stated that he has refuted the opinions of all the previous commentators and written a new commentary on the Gītā. Therefore, whether one takes the date of the birth of the Ācārya as Śaka 610 or Śaka 710, the Gītā must undoubtedly have been in vogue at least 200 to 300 years before that time. Let us now see in what way and to what extent we can go further back than that date, for fixing the date of the Gītā.

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(2) The late Mr. Telang has shown that Kālidāsa and Bāṇabhatta both knew of the Gītā. The stanza "anavāptam avāptavyam na te kimcana vidyate" in the Viṣṇu-Stuti in the Raghuvamśa (10.31) of Kālidāsa, is similar to the stanza "nān avāptam avāptavyam " etc., in the Gītā (Gī. 3.22); and in the paranomastic (śleṣa-pradhāna) sentence "mahābhāratam ivānanta gītā karṇan ānanditatarām" in the Kādambarī of Bāṇabhatta, there is a clear reference to the Gītā. Kālidāsa and Bhāravi are clearly referred to in a stone inscription dated Śaka 556; and it is now definitely proved, as shown by the late Mr. Pandurang Govind Shastri Parakhi, in his essay in Marathi on

Bāṇabhatta, that Bāṇabhatta was in the service of the king Śrī Harṣa, in about Śaka 528.

(3) In the Bhīṣma-parva of the Mahābhārata, which has found its way into Java, there is a chapter called the 'Gītā'; and in it, we find word for word 100 to 125 stanzas from various chapters in the Gītā. But there are no stanzas in it from the 12th, 15th, 16th, and 17th chapters. Yet, there is no objection, on that account, to saying that the Gītā was then as in its present form; because, the Gītā has been translated there into the Kavi language, and the Sanskrit stanzas found in it are taken by way of extracts or illustrations here and there.

'Therefore, it would not be proper to draw the conclusion that the Gītā then contained only as many stanzas as are found in this translation. Dr. Narhar Gopal Sardesai got this information in Java when he went there; and he has published it in the issue of the Modern Review for July 1914 as also in the Magazine called Chitramaya Jagat. It is clear from this, that the Bhīṣmaparva of the Mahābhārata contained the Gītā at least 200 years before Saka 400 to 500, and that the stanzas in it were in the same sequence as in the present Gītā.

(4) In the first chapter of this book, I have given some information about the references to the Gītā or the other Gītās written on the basis of the Bhagavadgītā, which are found in the Viṣṇu-Purāṇa, the Padma-Purana etc. In order that the Gītā should have been adopted in this way, it must have become authoritative and an object of respect even in those days. It is

clear that nobody would otherwise think of imitating it. It is, therefore, also clear that

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the Gītā must be at least 100 to 200 years earlier in point of time than the earliest of these Purāṇas. One cannot take the commencement of the age of the Purāṇas at later than the second century A. D.; and therefore, the date of the Gītā is taken back at any rate to somewhere about the beginning of the Śaka era.

(5) It has been stated above that both Kālidāsa and Bāṇa. knew about the Gītā. The dramas of Bhāsa, who lived before Kālidāsa, have been recently published. In the drama called Karṇabhāra, out of these dramas, we find the following as the twelfth stanza:-

hato 'pi labhate svargaṃ jītvā tu labhate yaśaḥ |  
ubhe bahumate loke nāsti niṣphalatā rage ||

This stanza is exactly the same as the stanza: "hato va prāpsyasi svargaṃ" etc. (Gī. 2.37); and, as it is proved from the other dramas of Bhāsa that he was fully acquainted with the Mahābhārata, one can safely draw the conclusion that in writing the stanza mentioned above, he had in mind the stanza in the Gītā referred to above. It, therefore, follows that the Mahābhārata and the Gītā existed before the date of Bhāsa.

Pandit Ganapati Shastri has proved that Bhāsa must have lived 200 to 300 years before the Śaka era. But, some are of the opinion that he lived 100 to 200 years after the Śaka era. Even if this latter opinion is correct, the Mahābhārata and the Gītā must have become commonly accepted books at least 100 to 200 years before the date of Bhāsa, that is to say, about the beginning of the Saka era.

(6) But, the late Mr. Tryambak Gurunath Kale has published in the English magazine issued by the Gurukul and called the Vedic Magazine, a forcible proof about old writers – having adopted stanzas from the Gītā ("Vol. 7, Nos. 6 and 7 pp. 528 – 532, Mārgaśīrṣa and Pauṣa Saṁvat 1970). Before this publication, Western Sanskritists were of opinion that the; Gītā was not found referred to in any books more ancient than the Sanskrit dramas or the Purāṇas, e. g., in the Sūtra treatises etc.; and that therefore, the Gītā must have been written shortly after the age of the Sūtras, that is to say, in about the second century of the Christian era. But the late Mr. Kale

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has shown that this surmise is wrong. In the Baudhāyana-Grhyaśeṣa-Sūtra (2.22.9), the stanza, "patraṁ puṣpaṁ" etc. (Gī. 9.26) has been taken 'verbatim with the opening remark "tadāha bhagavān" in the following words: –

deśābhāve dravyābhāve sādharṇe kuryān manasā  
vārcayed iti ।  
tadāha bhagavān –  
patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyaṁ yo me bhaktyā  
prayacchati tad ahaṁ bhakty upahṛtam aśnāmi  
prayatātmanaḥ ॥ iti ;

and it is stated further on, that one should become meek-minded by Devotion and then recite these incantations, of. "bhaktinamraḥ etān mantrān adhīyāta"; and it is stated at the end of the third praśna of this Gṛhyaśeṣa-Sūtra, that by reciting the twelve-lettered incantation "om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya", one acquired the same merit as that of performing an Aśvamedha-Yajña. From this it is clear that the Gītā, as also the worship of Vāsudeva, was fully in vogue before the date of Baudhāyana. Besides this, there is the following sentence in the Piṭṛmedha-Sūtra of Baudhāyana, in the beginning of the third praśna, namely,

jātasya vai manuṣyasya dhruvaṁ maraṇam iti  
vijānīyāt tasmā jāte na prahṛṣyen mṛte ca na viṣīdet,

which can clearly be seen to have been inspired by the following stanza in the Gītā: –

jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyuḥ dhruvaṁ janma mṛtasya ca ।  
tasmādaparihārye 'rthe na tvaṁ śocitum arhasi ॥ (Gī.  
2. 27);

and when, in addition to this, you take the stanza "patraṁ puṣpaṁ" etc., there remains no doubt whatsoever about the matter. It has been stated above that we find in the Baudhāyana-Sūtra, one stanza from the Mahābhārata itself. The date of Baudhāyana is about 100 to 200 years before Āpastamba; and Prof. Bühler has come to the conclusion . that the date of Āpastamba cannot be more than 300 years before Christ. [1] But, in my opinion, that date must be taken.

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slightly forward; because, there is no mention in the Mahābhārata of the zodiacal signs Meṣa, Vṛṣabha etc.; and the sentence "mīnameṣayor meṣavṛṣabhayor va vasantaḥ" of Baudhāyana has been quoted in the Kāla-Mādhava, and has also been taken in the Bhāratīya-Jyotiḥ-Śāstra (p. 102) written by the late Shankar Balkrishna Dikshit. From this also, one can draw the definite inferences, that the Mahābhārata is earlier in point of time than Baudhāyana; that Baudhāyana lived at least 400 years before the Śaka era; and that the Mahābhārata and the Gītā were written at least 500 years before the Śaka era. The late Mr. Kale has placed the date of Baudhāyana at 700 to 800 years before Christ, but that is not correct. He has

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[1] See Sacred Books of the East Series, Vol. II. Intro, p. xliii; and also the same Series Vol. XIV. Intro, p, xliii.



evidently lost sight of the statement of Baudhāyana regarding the zodiacal signs.

(7) It will be clearly seen by anybody from the above evidence that the present Gītā was in existence at least 500 years before the Śaka era; that it was known both to Baudhāyana and Āśvalāyana; and that one can trace the gradual history of it uninterruptedly right down to the date of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya. But all this evidence is from Vedic religious treatises; the evidence which I am now going to mention is from literature other than Vedic literature, that is to say, from Buddhistic literature; and the above-mentioned ancientness of the Gītā is more forcibly and independently established, in an unambiguous way, by that evidence. I have stated above the opinions of Bühler and of the celebrated French scholar Senart that the Bhāgavata religion had come into existence before Buddhism; and I have dealt with the question of the growth of Buddhism and of its relation to the Hindu religion etc., independently, in the next part of this Appendix. I am giving here in short only such references as are necessary for fixing the date of the Gītā. From the sole fact that the Bhāgavata religion was previous to Buddhism, one cannot draw the definite conclusion that the Gītā was also prior in point of time to Buddha; because, there is no definite evidences for saying that the Bhāgavata religion came into existence simultaneously with the Gītā. It is, therefore, necessary to see whether or not Buddhist writers refer anywhere specifically to

the Gītā. It is clearly stated even in the ancient Buddhistic treatises, that the four

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Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, the Vyākaraṇa, Astronomy, Itihāsa, Nighaṇṭu and other books relating to the Vedic religion existed at the time of Buddha. There is, therefore, no doubt that the Vedic religion had reached its perfection before the date of Buddha. Although the new religious sect which was formed after that date by Buddha, was, from the Metaphysical point of view, un-Ātmic (denying the existence of the Ātman ~Translator.), yet, from the point of view of conduct in life, it followed the Path of Renunciation preached in the Upaniṣads, as will be shown in the next part. But at the date of Asoka, this state of Buddhism had changed and Buddhist mendicants had given up living in the woods, and are seen to have gone as far as China towards the East, and as far as Alexandria and Greece towards the West, for the propagation of religion, and on other philanthropic missions. Why Buddhist mendicants gave up living in the woods and started doing philanthropic works is a question of immense importance in the history of Buddhism. If one considers the ancient Buddhistic treatises, it is stated in the Khaggavisāṇa-Sutta in the Sutta-nipāta that the 'bhikṣu' (mendicant), who reached the state of an arhata (Perfect) should live in the woods like a rhinoceros, without doing anything; and it is stated in the Mahāvagga (5.1.27) in the

story of Sonakolīvisa, the personal disciple of Buddha that: "for the mendicant who has reached the state of nirvāṇa (Annihilation) – "katassa paṭicayo natthi karaṇīyaṃ na vijjati" – "nothing remains to be done, and nothing of what has been done remains to be suffered for". This is Pure Renunciation, similar to the Path of Renunciation of our Upaniṣads. Not only is the sentence "karaṇīyaṃ na vijjati" similar in meaning to the words "tasya kāryaṃ na vidyate" in the Gītā, but it is word for word the same. But when this original renunciatory mode of life of Buddhist mendicants changed, and they began to perform philanthropic works, there arose a conflict between the old thought and the new thought, and those who belonged to the former began to call themselves 'theravāda' (older sect), and the new school of thought called their sect 'mahāyāna' (superior path) and began to refer to the older sect as 'hīnayāna' (inferior path). Aśvaghoṣa belonged to the Mahayana sect, and was of the opinion that,

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Buddhist yatins should take part in philanthropic works-. Therefore, in the advice which Buddha is shown to have given', to Nanda, at the end of the poem Saundarānanda, when Nanda had reached the state of an arhata, he first says: –

avāptakāryo 'si parāṃ gatim gataḥ

na te 'sti kimcit karaṇīyaṃ aṇvapi | (Sau. 18.54)

that is, "your duty in life is over, you have acquired the highest state; now there does not remain for you even the least duty (of your own)". And then, he goes on to say:—

vihāya tasmād iha kāryam ātmanaḥ

kuru sthirātman parakāryam apy atho | (Sau. 18. 57)

that is, "therefore, give up Action for yourself, but become perfectly equable in Reason, and perform Action for others"; There is a world of difference between the preaching of Buddha in the ancient books, which advocated Abandonment of Action, and the words put by Aśvaghoṣa into the mouth of Buddha in the Saundarānanda-kāvya; and it will be seen that this argument of Aśvaghoṣa, is similar not only in meaning but also literally and word for word to what is stated in the third chapter of the Gītā, namely, "tasya kāryam na vidyate" (i.e., "for him no duty (for his own benefit) has remained" – Trans,) ... and "tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samācara", i.e., "therefore, perform desirelessly that duty which has befallen you" (Gī. 3.17, 19). From this, one can draw the inference that this argument has been; borrowed by Aśvaghoṣa from the Gītā; because, as has been shown above, the Mahābhārata existed before Aśvaghoṣa. But this fact does not remain only in inference. It is stated in the book called, Tārānātha, which is a history of (Buddhism written in the Tibetan language, that the "Jñānin Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Gaṇeśa" were, responsible for Rāhulabhadra, the preceptor of Nagarjuna, who was the principal protagonist of the Mahayana sect, getting the idea of this Activistic improvement in the original

renunciatory path of the Buddhists. This book (Tārānātha) was translated' into German from the Russian, but not into English I have

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taken an extract from it (Tārānātha) from the book written by Dr. Kern in 1896 on the Buddhist religion. [1] Even Dr. Kern is of opinion that there is a reference to the Bhagavadgītā, by the word 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa'. There are some stanzas in the book named Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka out of the Buddhist religious treatises of the Mahāyāna sect, which are quite similar to the stanzas in the Bhagavadgītā. But, this and all other matters will be considered by me in the next part of this Appendix. All that I have to say at present is that Buddhist writers themselves admit that though the original Buddhistic religion advocated Asceticism, the Bhagavadgītā was responsible for the coming into existence of the Mahāyāna sect, which advocated Action and Devotion; and the similarity shown above between the writings of Aśvaghōṣa and the Gītā only strengthens this conclusion. Western scholars have come to the conclusion that Nāgārjuna, the first promulgator of the Mahāyāna sect, lived 100 to 150 years before the Śaka era; and it is quite clear that

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[1] See Dr. Kern's Manual of Indian Buddhism, Grundriss III. 8, p.122. The principal book of the Mahayana sect called Amitāyū-Sutta was translated into Chinese about 148 A. D.

the Mahāyāna doctrine must have been initiated during the reign of the king Aśoka. Therefore, it is proved independently from Buddhistic books and from the histories of Buddhism written by Buddhist writers themselves, that the Bhagavadgītā was in existence before the rise of the Mahāyāna sect, and possibly even before the date of Aśoka – that is, at least 300 years before the Christian era.

When one considers all the proofs mentioned above, there does not remain the slightest doubt that the present Bhagavadgītā was in existence at least 500 years before the Saka era. The opinions of Dr. Bhandarkar, the late Mr. Telang, Rao Bahadur Chintamanrao Vaidya, and the late Mr. Dikshit were more or less the same, and they must be taken as correct on this point. The opinion of Prof. Garbe is different; and he has taken the words "yogo naṣṭaḥ" – i.e., "in whom Yoga has been destroyed", from the stanzas relating to the tradition of the Gītā doctrine in the fourth chapter of the Gītā, as an authority for his opinion; and he has interpreted the word 'yogo' there to mean 'Pātañjala-Yoga'. But I have shown above with authorities

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that the word 'yogo' in this place does not mean 'Pātañjala-Yoga' but means Karma-Yoga. Therefore, the opinion of Prof.

Garbe is wrong and unacceptable. It, therefore, follows beyond! doubt that the date of the present Gītā must be taken as not later than 500 years before the Śaka era. I have shown in Part IV above that the original Gītā must have been some centuries older.

## **PART VI– THE GĪTĀ AND BUDDHISTIC LITERATURE.**

In order to fully realise the importance of the evidence of Buddhistic works adduced by me above for fixing the date of the present Gītā, it is necessary to consider here shortly the general similarities and dissimilarities between the Gītā on the one hand and the Buddhistic treatises or Buddhistic religion on the other hand. I have mentioned above in any number of places that the Sthitaprajña of the Gītā belongs to Path of Energism; and that that is the most important feature of the Gītā-doctrine. But, if one keeps aside for a moment this special feature of the Sthitaprajña , and considers only his mental and moral qualities, one sees a very strange similarity between the characteristics of the Sthitaprajña (Gī. 2.55 – 72), the Brahmanīṣṭha (4.19 – 23; 5.18 – 28), and the Bhakti-yogin (12.13 – 19), mentioned in the Gītā, and the characteristics mentioned in various Buddhistic works of an arhata who has become fit for Nirvāṇa, that is to say, of a Buddhist yatin, who has reached

the state of perfection (Dhammapada stanzas 360 – 423 and Muni-Sutta and Dhammika-Sutta out of the Sutta-nipāta). In these descriptions, we also find similarity of words where, like the Sthitaprajña, or the 'bhaktimān', the true mendicant (bhikṣu) is described as being 'peaceful' (śānta), 'desireless' (niṣkāma), 'mine-less' (nirmama), 'desireless' (nirāśī), or (nirissita), 'equal in pain or happiness' (sama-duḥkha-sukha), 'non-commencing' (nirārambha), 'homeless' (aniketana or aniveśana), 'equal in praise or disparagement' (sama-nindāstuti), and 'one who consider respect or disrespect, profit or loss, as the same' (See Dhammapada 40, 41 and 91; Sutta-nipāta, Muni-sutta, 1.7 and 14, Dvayatānupassana-sutta 21 – 23; and Vinaya-piṭaka, Culla-vagga 7.4.7). The idea that what is light to the Jñānin is darkness to the Ajñānin (Ignorant) conveyed by the words "yā niśā sarvabhūtānāṃ tasyāṃ jāgati saṃyamī" (Gī. 2.69)

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is to be seen in the 40th stanza of the Dvayatānupassana-sutta. and the words "arosaneyyo na roseti" – i.e., "one who is himself not worried, and who does not worry others", in the 10th stanza of the Muni-sutta, is similar to the description in the Gītā in the words "yasmān no 'dvijate loko lokān nodvijate ca yaḥ" (Gt 12.15)- Similarly, we find in the Salla-sutta, with slight verbal differences, the following ideas of the Gītā, namely, 'that which has come to birth, is sure to die', or, 'in as



much as the beginning, or the end of created things is imperceptible (avyakta), it is futile to lament over them' (See Salla-sutta, 1 and 9; and Gī. 2.27 and 28); and the description to be found in the tenth chapter of the Gītā and in the Anugītā (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 43, 44) in the words "the Sun out of the luminaries, the Moon out of the constellations, Gayatri out of the Vedic incantations" etc. is repeated just as it is in the Sela-sutta (21, 22) and Mahāvagga (6. 35. 8). There are besides numerous other similarities of ideas which have been shown in the notes appended by the late Mr. Telang to his English translation of the Gītā. But, on account of the insufficiency of the means then available for determining how these similarities came to be, or whether these ideas were originally from the Buddhistic literature or from the Vedic religious literature, and what inferences can be drawn from these facts, the late Mr. Telang has not written anything in this matter beyond merely showing this strange similarity of words and meaning. But much more information about the Buddhistic religion has now become available; and as these questions are solved by that information, I will now briefly mention that information about the Buddhistic religion here. The English translation of the Gītā, made by the late Mr. Telang, has been published in the Sacred Books of the East Series. English translations of Buddhistic religious treatises, have been published further on in the same Series. This information has been principally taken from those translations; and the references to these Buddhistic treatises, as authorities,, are to

the translations in this Series; and the Pali words or sentences quoted in some places have been taken from the original Pali books.

The Buddhistic religion is, like the Jain religion, somewhat like a son who has separated from his, father after taking from,

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him as much of his wealth as he wanted. Therefore, it is not a stranger religion, but is only a branch, which has come into existence in India, out of the previous Brahmin religion. This position has now been established beyond doubt. In the old Pali treatises to be found in Ceylon, such as, the Mahāvamśa or the Dīpavamśa, there is a description about the kings who ruled after Buddha, as also the historical tradition of the various Buddhistic preceptors. Calculating time by reference to these books, one comes to the conclusion that Gautama Buddha reached the age of 80 years and died 543 years before Christ. But some of the stories in these books are inconsistent with each other. Therefore, Prof. Max Müller has made a critical examination of this calculation of time, and laid down the proposition that the true date of the death of Buddha must have been 473 years before the Christian era; and Dr. Buhler has shown that the same date is arrived at from the stone inscriptions of Aśoka. But some critics like Prof. Rhys-Davids or

Dr. Kern say, that this date must be pushed forward by between 65 to 100 years; and Prof. Geiger has very recently examined all these opinions, and drawn the conclusion that the true date of death of the Buddha must have been 483 years before the Christian era. [1] Whichever date is accepted, this much at least is beyond doubt, that the Vedic religion had reached its fullest expansion before the birth of Buddha; and that, not only the Upaniṣads but also other religious works like the Dharma-Sūtras, were in existence before that date; because, there are statements in the ancient Buddhistic religious treatises in the Pali language, that Gautama Buddha had personal discussions and conversations with some highly moral Brahmins, and bearded ascetics, who were well-versed in "the four Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, Vyākaraṇa,

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Astronomy, Itihāsa (history), Nighaṇṭu (medicine) etc., and had converted them to his own religion. (See the description of Sela in the Sela-sutta out of the Sutta-nipāta and Vaththugāthā 30 – 45). And just as ritualistic śrauta sacrifices have

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[1] Some information about the date of the death of Gautama Buddha will be found in the Introduction to the English translation of the Dhammapada made by Prof. Max Müller (8. B. B. Vol. 2, Intro, pp. xxxv-xlv)) and that matter has been examined by Dr. Geiger in his Introduction to the translation of the Mahāvamśa, published in 1912 (The Mahāvamśa, by Dr. Geiger, Pali Text .Society, Intro, p. xxii et seq.).

been deprecated in the Kaṭha and other Upaniṣads (Kaṭha. 1.18; Muṇḍa. 1. 2. 10), or in the Gītā, consistently with those Upaniṣads (2. 40 – 45; 9. 20 and 21), so also, and to a certain extent in the same words, has Buddha proved in the Tevijja-sutta (Traividya-Sūtra), that "yajñas, yāgas, etc. are useless and discardable"; and he has explained how that state, which is described by Brahmins as 'brahmasahavyatāya' (brahmasahavyatyaya = brahma-sāyujyatā) can, according to him, be attained. From this it is clear, that the Buddhistic religion has come into existence by bringing about an improvement in the two branches of the Brahmin religion, namely, the Karma-kāṇḍa and Jñāna-kāṇḍa – that is, the state of a householder and the state of an ascetic, or in other words, Activism (pravṛtti) and Renunciation (nivṛtti) – after those two branches had become fully established. The ordinary rule of every reform is that some of the former matters remain and others change; and let us now consider, according to this rule, which things out of the Vedic religion remain in Buddhism and which have been given up. This question must be considered from the point of view of the state of the householder and of Asceticism. But as Buddhism was originally renunciatory or purely Inactivistic, we will first consider the aspect of Renunciation in both the religions, and then consider the state .of the householder in both.

If one considers the Vedic Path of Renunciation, the principal element in it, will be seen to be the belief that all the activities

in the world of Action are productive of Desire, that is to say, full of unhappiness; and that, in order to enable the Ātman to permanently escape from it, that is, from the cycle of births and deaths, (i) the Mind has to be made desireless and renounced, and must be fixed on the eternal Parabrahman in the form of the Ātman, which forms the foundation of the entire visible universe, and (ii) one has to totally abandon the duties of family life and remain perpetually steeped in this Ātmified state. Out of these, the visible world is defined by Name and

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Form, and is perishable; and its unobstructed activity continues as a result of Causality (karma-vipāka).

kammanā vattatī loko kammanā vattatī pajā (prajā) |  
kammani bandhanā sattā (satvāni) rathassa 'ñīva yāyato  
|| (Suttani. Vāsethasutta, 61).

that is; "the world, as also its inhabitants, continue in life as a result of Karma; just as the course of the moving chariot is regulated by its axis, so also is every created being bound by Karma". This principle of the Jñāna-kāṇḍa of the Vedic religion, or perhaps even the idea of the cycle of birth and death, as also the Vedic deities, Brahma, Indra, Maheshvara, Isvara, Yama etc., and their various spheres, such as, svarga, (heaven)

pātāla (antipodes) etc., described in the Brahmin religion, were- accepted by Buddha; and on that account, such technical words of Vedānta and Sāṃkhya philosophy, as 'nāma-rūpa', 'karma-vipāka', 'avidyā', 'upādāna' , 'prakṛti' etc., as also the traditions about Brahma and other Vedic deities (maintaining always the superiority of Buddha) are always to be found with some difference or other in Buddhistic literature. But, although the doctrines of the Vedic religion, regarding the world of Action, that the visible world is perishable and non-permanent, and that its activities are going on as a result of Causality,, were accepted by Buddha, yet, the doctrine of the Vedic religion or of the Upaniṣads, that there is some eternal, all-pervasive, element like Parabrahman, which is uniform with the Ātman,, and is undefined by Name and Form, and which is the foundation of the perishable universe defined by Name and Form,, was not accepted by Buddha. This is the crucial difference between the two religions. Gautama Buddha has clearly said. (Sabbāsava-sutta 9 – 13), that the Ātman or the Brahman does. not exist in reality, but is a mere illusion; and that, therefore, no one should waste his time in thinking about the Ātman and the Non- Ātman, or on the meditation of, the Brahman. That Buddha did not admit any theory about the Ātman, is patent from the Brahmajāla-sutta out of the Digghanikāyā. [1]

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[1] The Brahmajāla sutta has not been translated into English; but a summary of it has been given by Prof. Rhys-Davids in the Sacred Books of the East Series Vol. XXVI. Intro, pp. xxiii-xxv,. to which the reader is

In this sutta after mentioning 62 different ideas about the Ātman, as to -whether the Ātman and the Brahman are one or two, it is stated that they are all illusory 'visions' (dṛṣṭi); and even in the Milinda-prāśna, it is clearly stated by Nāgasena to the Greek Milinda (Minander), that according to Buddhism, "the Ātman is not something which really exists" (Mi, Pra. 2.3.6 and 2.7.15). When one accepts the position that both the Ātman and the Brahman are illusions, and not real, the very foundation of religion is really speaking destroyed; because, in that case, all that remains is non- permanent things; and permanent happiness, as also someone who can realise that permanent happiness, ceases to exist; and it is on this account that Śrīmad Śaṅkarācārya has condemned that opinion as unacceptable even on logical, grounds. But, as we have now to consider only what the- original Buddhistic religion was, we will not enter into that discussion here, but will see how Buddha has further justified his own religion. Although Buddha did not accept the existence of the Ātman, yet, he has fully accepted the two positions that (1) as a result of Causality, the Body which is defined by Name and Form (and not the Ātman) has to take birth over and over again in this perishable world; and that (2) this cycle of re-incarnation or worldly life itself, is

full of unhappiness, and it is necessary to acquire permanent peace or happiness by escaping from it. When in this way, the unhappiness of worldly life, and the necessity of overcoming such unhappiness have been admitted, the Vedic question about the way in which that unhappiness can be removed, and how the highest happiness can be reached, still remains; and it becomes necessary to give some satisfactory answer to that question. The writers of the Upaniṣads themselves have said that one cannot escape the Cycle of Worldly Life (bhava-cakra) by performing sacrificial ritual; and Buddha has gone even further than that, and said that all these sacrificial Actions involved destruction of life, and were on that account totally prohibited and unacceptable. Also, if the Brahman itself is considered to be a stupendous 'Illusion', then the Knowledge of the Brahman also becomes, an illusory and impossible path for destroying unhappiness. Then, in what way can one escape from this unhappy Cycle of

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Worldly Life? The reply of Buddha to this question is that a good doctor first determines the root cause of any disease, and then removes that cause in order to cure the disease. In the same way, in order to cure the disease of worldly unhappiness, a wise man must (3) understand what the cause of that unhappiness is, and (4) follow that path by which that cause can be totally destroyed. Now, when one considers the



question of the cause of this unhappiness, one sees that Thirst or Desire is the root of all the unhappiness in the world; and that when once the Name-d and Form-ed Body has been destroyed, other Name-d and Form-ad Bodies come into existence one after the other from this seed of Desire, which survives the destruction of the Name-d and Form-ed body. And Buddha has come to the conclusion that (i) in order to escape the painful cycle of birth and death, the path of becoming a Saṃnyāsin or a bhikṣu, after having destroyed Desire by control of the organs, by meditation, and by asceticism, becomes the only true path; and that (ii) eternal peace and happiness can be reached only by this Renunciation based on indifference to worldly life. In short, Buddhism does not attach any importance to sacrificial ritual etc., nor to the meditation on the Ātman and the Non- Ātman; but rests on the four visible factors, (i) the fact of the existence of worldly unhappiness, (ii) the cause of such unhappiness, (iii) the necessity of controlling or removing it, and (iv) the means in the shape of Renunciation, for totally doing away with it; or, in Buddhistic terminology, on 'unhappiness' (duḥkha), 'origin of unhappiness' (samudaya), 'control of unhappiness' (nirodha), and ' the path of destroying it ' (mārga); and Buddha has called these four fundamental elements of his religion, the 'Sublime Verities' (ārya-satya). Although the Buddhistic religion is in this way founded on the visible foundation of the four 'Sublime Verities', instead of on the Upaniṣadic Knowledge of the Ātman, yet, as the Path (the fourth Verity) preached by

Buddha for acquiring eternal peace or happiness, namely, the path of making the Mind desireless by destroying Thirst or Desire, is the same as the path mentioned in the Upaniṣads for obtaining Release, it becomes quite clear that Desirelessness of the Mind is the ultimate visible ideal according to both these religions. But the writers of

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the Upaniṣads, who look upon the Brahman as identical, with the Ātman, refer to this Desirelessness of the Mind as 'ātmaniṣṭhā', 'brahma-saṁsthā', 'brahma-bhūtātā', or 'brahma-nirvāṇa' (Gī. 5. 17 – 25; Chan. 2. 23. 1), that is to say, the merging the Ātman into the Brahman, all which words are denotative of the Ultimate Root; whereas, Buddha refers to that state as merely 'nirvāṇa', which means 'obtaining Rest', or 'the destruction of Desire in the same way as a lamp goes out', which definition merely denotes some Action. This is the difference between the two religions. Because, when you say that the Brahman or the Ātman is an illusion, the questions 'who acquires the rest?', and, 'in what does he rest?', do not any more remain, (cf. Ratana-sutta, 14, and Vaṅgīsa-sutta 12 and 13, out of the Sutta-nipāta); and Buddha has clearly said, that a wise man should not waste time in thinking about 'these moot questions (Sabbāsava-sutta 9 – 13, and Milinda Praśna 4.2.4 and 5). As there is no re-birth after this state has been reached, the word 'death', which is applied' to the ordinary

phenomenon of one body being destroyed and another body being acquired, cannot be applied to 'nirvāṇa', even according to Buddhism. 'nirvāṇa' is the 'death of death', or, as is stated in the Upaniṣads, it is 'the path of overcoming death', and not merely 'death'. When any man has reached this state, he does not any more care for his body, just as the serpent does not care for the slough which it has thrown away.. This illustration which has been given in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (4.4.7) has been given in each stanza in the Uraga-sutta in the Sutta-nipāta in describing the true Buddhist mendicant (bhikṣu). And, as the Ātman is always free from sin as also from merit (Bṛ. 4.4.23), he the bhikṣu does not suffer from such sins as matricide, patricide etc. This principle of the Vedic religion (Kauṣī. 3.1) has also been adopted just as it is in the Dhammapada (Dhamma. 294 and 295, and Milinda-Praśna, 4.5.7). In short, although Buddha did not accept the existence of the Brahman and of the Ātman, yet, as that very path which has been mentioned in the Upaniṣads as leading to Release, namely, the path of making the Mind peaceful, apathetic, and desireless, is also the path for the acquisition of Nirvāṇa according to Buddhism, the descriptions of the Buddhist monk and of the

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Vedic Saṁnyāsin are exactly similar to each other from the point of view of their mental condition. And, therefore, the

doctrines regarding the responsibility for sinful or meritorious actions, or regarding the escape from the cycle of birth and death, are the same in the Vedic Paths of Renunciation as in Buddhism. But, as the Vedic religion was prior in point of time to Gautama Buddha, there is not the slightest doubt that these ideas were originally from the Vedic religion.

I have so far pointed out the differences and the similarities between the Vedic and the Buddhistic Paths of Renunciation. Let us now see what Buddha had to say regarding the state of a householder. Although Buddhism is based on four visible foundations, namely, the existence of unhappiness in worldly life, etc., and does not attach any importance to the Philosophy of the Ātman and the Non-Ātman, yet, it must be borne in mind that Buddhism was not fundamentally Energistic, like the purely Materialistic religion of modern philosophers like Comte, or even like the Gītā-religion. It is true that Buddha does not accept the philosophical 'vision' (dṛṣṭi) of the Knowledge of the Ātman described in the Upaniṣads. But, as Buddhism has adopted in toto the doctrine enunciated by Yājñavalkya in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (Br. 4.4.6), that it is the highest duty of every man in this world to give up worldly life altogether, and to make the Mind desireless and free from slavery to the objects of pleasure, that religion has fundamentally become a religion of Renunciation purely. The sum and substance of the whole advice of Buddha is, that it is impossible to acquire the highest

happiness, or the position of an arhata, if one remains in the state of a householder. Still, it is not that Buddhism does not at all deal with the state of a householder. Buddhistic treatises have given the name 'upāsaka' to those persons who, without becoming monks, put faith in BUDDHA, in his RELIGION, and in the SOCIETIES of MONKS, and who surrender themselves to these three, by reciting the incantation 'buddhaṃ śaraṇaṃ gacchāmi', 'dharmaṃ śaraṇaṃ gacchāmi', 'saṃghaṃ śaraṇaṃ gacchāmi', i.e., 'I surrender myself to Buddha, to his religion, and to the religious societies'. These Upāsakas may be taken to be the householders of Buddhism; and Buddha himself has in some

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places preached how these Upāsakas should live in the state of householders, when he had occasion to give this advice (Mahāparinibbāṇa-sutta, 1. 24). Buddha did not accept either the Śrauta religious sacrifices pertaining to the state of a householder, which involved the slaughter of animals, or the division of society into the four castes. When these things are eliminated, all that remain out of the duties of a householder, are the five Mahāyajñas of the Smṛtis, philanthropy and other charitable duties, and leading a moral life; and in describing ;the state of a householder, these are the only things which are /referred to in Buddhistic religious treatises. Buddha has said that every householder, or Upāsaka, must

perform the five Mahāyajñas; and he has also clearly laid down that the Buddhist Upāsaka must observe such rules of Morality as, Non-Violence (ahimsā), Veracity (satyam), Not Stealing (asteyam), Sympathy towards all created things (sarvabhūtānukampā), Self-Identification (although he did not accept the existence of the Ātman), Purity, or mental chastity, and especially, making charitable gifts of food, raiment etc. to Buddhist monks or Buddhist monasteries. This is technically known in Buddhism as 'śīla' (Morality); And these rules of Morality have, like the five Mahāyajñas, been adopted by Buddha from the Dharma-Sūtras or the ancient Smṛti treatises (Manu. 6.92 and 10. 63) of the Brahmin religion, as becomes quite clear when one compares both [1]. Nay, Buddha himself has praised the old Brahmin race with reference to this mode of life; the Brahmana-Dhammika-sutta; and some of the stanzas from the Manu-Smṛti have been adopted word for word into the Dhammapada (See Manu. 2.121, and 5.45; and Dhammapada, 109 and 131). But, it is not that Buddhism has adopted only the five Mahāyajñas and the principles of Morality from our Vedic treatises. Buddha had also accepted the opinion expressed in some of the earlier Upaniṣads, that Release is never attained according to the Vedic religion by remaining in the state of a householder. For instance, while comparing the Upāsaka with a Bhikṣu in the Dhammika-sutta in the Suttanipāta, Buddha has clearly stated that a householder may by living a pure life, at most reach the sphere

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[1] See Dr. Kern's Manual of Buddhism (Grundriss, III. 8) p. 68.

of the 'self-illuminated' (svayaṃprakāśa) gods; but that in order to escape

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the cycle of births and deaths, he must give up his wife and children, and ultimately take up the life of a monk. (See Dhammika-sutta, 17. 29; and Br̥. 4. 4. 6; Ma. Bhā. Vana. 2. 63).. There is a statement in the Tevijjasutta that in arguing with ritualising Vedic Brahmins, Buddha used to adopt the following argument in order to justify his advocacy of Renunciation, namely, "if your Brahman does not have any wife or children or any mental emotions, how will you reach that Brahman by remaining with your wife and children and performing ritualistic sacrifices (Te. Sū. 1.35; 3.5); and it is well known that Buddha himself acquired the state of Release after having given up his wife and son in the bloom of youth, and lived the life of a monk for six years. The same is the teaching of the Jain saint Mahāvīra, who lived at the same time as Buddha, but who entombed himself (became samādhistha) before Buddha. But the important difference between these two religions is that Mahāvīra did not deny the existence of the Ātman like Buddha, and that Jain monks followed– and even to this day follow– the rules of abandoning clothes and other worldly pleasures, and the 'creed of Non-Violence (ahiṃsā),, even more rigorously than Buddhist monks. Buddha himself used to eat the flesh known as 'pavatta' (in Sanskrit, pravṛtta),. i.e., '

flesh which is already there ', of animals which had not . been killed for eating, except the flesh of elephants, lions, and some other animals; and he had also permitted Buddhist monks to eat 'pavatta' flesh and fish; and according to Buddhism, going, about naked without clothes, is a crime (Mahāvagga. 6.31.14; and 8.28.1). In short, although the definite advice of Buddha to. his disciples was that one should become a monk, denying, the existence of the Ātman, yet, he was not in favour of severe religious austerities entailing bodily pain (Mahāvagga. 5.1.16,. and Gī. 6.16); and the normal arrangement in the monasteries. {vihara) built for the residence of Buddhist monks was such,, that they could perform the Yogic practices of prāṇāyāma etc., without suffering bodily pain. Nevertheless, as it is a fixed principle of Buddhism that the state of a householder must be given up in order to acquire the bliss of Nirvāṇa, or the state of an arhata (Perfect), that mode of life does not contravene the. statement that Buddhism supports Renunciation (saṁnyāsa)

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Although Buddha was firmly of opinion that the Knowledge of the Brahman, or the meditation on the Ātman and the Non-Ātman, was a great net of confusion, yet, he had accepted the Upaniṣadic procedure of making the Mind 'free from the slavery to objects of pleasure' (nirviṣaya) by cultivating: indifference towards worldly life, which (procedure) pertained to the Path of Renunciation, in order to achieve the visible



object of escaping from the painful cycle of birth and death, and obtaining perpetual Peace (śānti); and when it has once been proved that Buddhism accepts all the Vedic moral precepts, relating to the state of a householder, with only slight modifications here and there, except those relating to the division of society into four castes and to the slaughter of animals for ritualistic sacrifice into the fire, there is no wonder that the descriptions of Vedic Saṁnyāsins given in the Upaniṣads or in the Manu-Smṛti etc., and the descriptions of Buddhist monks or of an arhata, or such rules of Morality as Non-Violence etc., should be the same – nay, sometimes word for word the same – in both the religions. All these things are originally from the Vedic religion; but, these are not the only things which have been taken by Buddhists from the Vedic religion. Buddhistic Jataka-treatises like the Daśaratha-Jataka, are in the same way only transformations of ancient Vedic stories. from the Purāṇas, which have been made consistent with Buddhism. Not only Buddhists, but even Jains, have in this way transformed Vedic stories in their Abhinava-Purāṇa; and the Mahomedan religion, which came into existence after the death of Christ, has similarly perverted one story from the life of Christ, as has been stated by Prof. Sale [1]; and it has been established by recent researches, that Jews in the same way transformed the religious stories of the ancient Chaldeans, for describing the creation of the Universe, the Deluge, or the Arc

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[1] See Sale's Koran "To the Reader", (Preface), p. X; and the Preliminary Discourse, Sec. IV, p. 58, (Chandos Classics Edition).

of Noah, in their Old Testament. If we see that the Buddhistic religious treatises have thus adopted – and that too, sometimes absolutely literally – the descriptions, stories, or ideas to be found in the Upaniṣads, the ancient Dharma-Sūtras,

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or in the Manu-Smṛti, then, one can naturally draw the inference that the stanzas 'enmity is increased by victory', and 'enmity does not destroy enmity', from the Udyogaparva (Ma. Bhā. Udyo. 71.59 and 63), or the stanza, 'the anger of another should be conquered by peacefulness' from the Viduranīti (Ma. Bhā. Udyo. 38. 63), or the statement of Janaka that, " if you annoint one of my hands with sandalwood-paste and cut off the other hand, it will be all the same to me" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 320.36), as also the several other stanzas from the Mahābhārata, which are seen to be word for word the same in Buddhistic treatises (Dhammapada 5 and 223, and Milinda-Praśna 7.3.5), must have been originally in the Mahābhārata, from where they were adopted by Buddhists. But, though one can, without fear of contradiction, say that the stanzas or ideas from the Vedic Upaniṣads, Brahma-Sūtras, or the Manu-Smṛti, which one comes across in the Buddhistic treatises, were copied by them from those Vedic treatises, since those treatises were undoubtedly more ancient than Buddha, one cannot say the same thing about the Mahābhārata. As the

Mahābhārata contains a reference to Buddhistic Ḍāgobās, it is quite clear that the last edition of that work must have been made after the date of Buddha; but one cannot merely on the ground of similarity of stanzas, draw the conclusion that the present Mahābhārata must have been prior in point of time to the Buddhistic treatises; and as the Gītā is a part of the Mahābhārata, the same argument may be applied to the Gītā. Besides, as has been stated above, the Gītā contains a reference to the Brahma-Sūtras and the Brahma-Sūtras contain a refutation of Buddhistic opinions. Therefore, we will now consider whether or not we can find some other evidence in Buddhistic treatises, in addition to the similarity between the descriptions of the Sthitaprajña etc., in the Gītā and the Buddhistic treatises, which will remove such a doubt, and establish beyond question the fact that the Gītā was earlier in point of time than the Buddhistic treatises.

I have stated above that the original form of Buddhism totally denied the existence of the Ātman, and was in favour of Renunciation; but it did not retain this its form for long. Not only did several sub-sects come into existence after the

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death of Buddha, as a result of differences of opinion about the rules of conduct to be followed by monks, but such

differences of opinion came into existence also as regards the - philosophy of Buddhism. And now-a-days there are even people, who assert that Buddha, by saying that there was no Ātman, intended only to say that, "instead of wasting your time in dry discussions about the Knowledge of the unimaginable Ātman, make the Mind desireless by practising indifference to worldly life; let there be an Ātman, or no Ātman; concentration of the Mind is of primary importance, and you must first make an effort to acquire that concentration". And these critics say that Buddha did not intend to deny the existence of the Brahman or of the Ātman, because, in the Tevijja-Sutta, Buddha himself has described the state of 'brahma-sahavyatāya'; and in the Sela-sutta and the Theragāthā, he has described his own state by saying: "I am Brahmabhūta" (Sela. Sū. 14; Ther. Gā. 831). But, whatever the original intention of Buddha may have been, yet, there is no doubt that various philosophical opinions, arguments, or doctrinal sects, saying "neither the Ātman nor the Brahman, nor any other Eternal Substance is the fundamēt Of the universe; all that we see is transient and non-existent", or, "whatever can be seen is only Knowledge", came into existence later on out of his doctrines (Ve. Sū. Sam. Bhā. 2.2.18 – 26). This atheistic or un-Ātmic Buddhistic doctrine is also known as 'kṣaṇikavāda' (Theory of Transience), 'śūnyavāda' (Theory of Non-Existence), or 'vijñāna-vāda' (Theory of Knowledge). But it is not necessary for us to deal with all these various sects here. We have to deal with the historical aspect

of the matter; and I shall, therefore, mention here only as much as is necessary for solving that historical question, namely, the history of only the Mahayana sect. As the existence of the Ātman or the Brahman (and necessarily also of the Paramātmān, or the Parameśvara), had been denied or considered of minor importance in the religion originally preached by Buddha, it was hardly possible that he could have personally preached in his lifetime the path of reaching the Parameśvara by means of Devotion; and so long as his imposing figure and his course of life were before the eyes of

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the people, there was no necessity for that religious path. But the path of devotion gradually came into favour with ordinary people, and it became necessary to show them some easier and more practical course than the atheistic renunciatory path of giving up worldly life, becoming a monk, and (without knowing in what, to become annihilated) attaining Annihilation (nirvāṇa), where one was. Nay, it is even possible that the ordinary devotees of Buddha, followed the Vedic Path of Devotion, which 'was then in vogue, and started the worship of Buddha of their own accord. Therefore, shortly after the Annihilation (nirvāṇa) of Buddha, some Buddhist philosophers gave to Buddha himself the form of a " self-created (svayāmbhū), and eternal (anādyanta), Highest Spirit (puruṣottama)"; and preached that attaining 'Annihilation'

(nirvāṇa) was only his pastime, and that "the true Buddha can never be destroyed and is always eternal". And it also came to be preached in Buddhistic treatises, that as "the true Buddha is the father of the world and the people are his children", he is "equable towards everybody, and loves none and hates none"; and that, "when the state of religion gets disrupted, he takes incarnations from time to time, for 'propagating religion' in the shape of Buddha"; and that "by worshipping this devādhīva (god of gods) Buddha, by worshipping his religious books, and by preaching before his Ḍāgobā", nay, "by devoutly offering to him a few lotus-buds or even a single flower", man attains the highest of states (See Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka 2.77 – 98; 5.22; 15.5 – 22; and Milinda-Praśna 3.7.7). [1] It is even stated in the Milinda-Praśna that "although the whole of the life of a man may have been spent in evil actions, yet, if he surrenders himself to Buddha at the moment of death, he will without doubt reach heaven" (Mi. Pra. 3.7.2); and it is stated in detail in the second and third chapters of the Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka, that "as the spiritual status, inherent nature, and spiritual knowledge of all persons is not the same, Buddha, out of kindness and by his skill (upāyakauśalya), created this path (yāna) of Devotion, in addition to the Renunciatory un-Ātmic

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[1] The work Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka has been translated in Volume XXI of the Sacred Books of the East Series. This book is originally in the Sanskrit language; and the original Sanskrit text has also now been published.

path". It was not possible at any time to entirely discard the doctrine preached by Buddha himself that one must take up the state of a monk in order to reach 'Annihilation' (nirvāṇa); because, doing so would have amounted to cutting at the very foundation of the original preaching of Buddha. But there was no objection to saying that it was the duty of Buddhist monks to; -perform philanthropical and charitable acts like the propagation of religion with a desireless (nirissita) frame of mind, instead of living alone and in dejection in the forest like a 'rhinoceros', though they might be monks. [1] This opinion has been advocated in the Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka and other treatises of the Mahāyāna sect, and Nāgasena has told Milinda (Mi. Pra. 6.2.4), that, "it is not impossible to attain Annihilation (nirvāṇa) t by remaining in the state of a householder, and that many such cases are to be seen ". Anybody will easily realise that these ideas are not from the original un-Ātmic and renunciatory Buddhistic religion, and that they cannot be supported on the basis of the Theory of Non-Existence (śūnya-vāda), or the Theory of Knowledge (vijñāna-vāda); and .many Buddhists at first thought that these ideas were inconsistent with the original preaching of Buddha. But -this new opinion

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[1] The refrain (dhruva-pada) of the 41 stanzas of the Khaggavisāṇa-sutta out of the Sutta-nipāta is "eko care khaggavisāṇa kappo", 'khaggavisāṇa' means 'rhinoceros', and the refrain means that the Buddhist monk should live alone in the woods like a rhinoceros.

naturally became more and more popular later on, and the Path followed by; those who adhered "to the original preaching of Buddha acquired the name of 'Hīnayāna' (inferior path), and the new path came to be known as ' Mahāyāna ' (superior path) [1] The

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Buddhistic religion now in vogue in China, Japan, Tibet etc., is of the Mahāyāna sect; and the societies of monks belonging; to the Mahāyāna sect were principally responsible for the vigorous expansion of Buddhism after the Annihilation (nirvāṇa) of Buddha. Dr. Kern has come to the conclusion that this reform in Buddhism must have taken place about 300 years before the Śalivāhana Śaka, [2] because, there was a big conference of Buddhist monks in the reign of the Śaka king

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[1] In describing the difference between the Hīnayāna and the Mahāyāna sects, Dr. Kern says as follows:— "Not the Arhat, who has shaken off all human feeling, but the generous, self-sacrificing, active Bodhisattva is the ideal of the Mahayanists, and this attractive side of the creed has, more perhaps than anything else, contributed to their wide conquests, whereas Southern Buddhism has not been able to make converts, except where the soil has been prepared by Hinduism and Mahayanism" – Manual of Indian Buddhism, p. 69. 'Southern Buddhism' means Hīnayāna; the Philosophy of Devotion has found a place in the Mahāyāna creed. "Mahayanism lays great stress on devotion, in this respect as in many others, harmonising with the current of feeling in India which led to the growing importance of Bhakti" (Ibid. p. 124).



Kaniṣka. We find statements in Buddhistic works that monks of the Mahāyāna sect were present at that conference; and the Chinese translation of the most important sūtra-book of this Mahāyāna sect called Amitāyu sutta, made in about 148 A D., is now available. But in my opinion, this date must be taken still further back; because, the stone inscriptions made by Aśoka about 230 B. C. do not contain any reference to the atheistic Buddhistic religion, but to the humanitarian and Activistic Buddhistic religion. It is, therefore, clear that the Mahāyāna doctrine of Buddhism had begun to acquire the Activistic form, before that date. The Buddhist monk Nāgārjuna was the principal protagonist and not the originator of this sect.

As it was not possible that the original atheistic Buddhistic religion, which denied the existence of the Brahman and the Ātman, and accepted only the Renunciatory path of the Upaniṣads which (path) aimed at freeing the mind from the slavery to objects of pleasure, should gradually and naturally

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[2] See Dr. Kern's Manual of Indian Buddhism pp. 6, 69 and 119. Milinda (the Greek king named Minander) ruled in the country called Bactria, in the north-west of India about 140 or 150 B. C.; and it is stated in the Milinda-Praśna that Nāgasena then converted him to Buddhism. As this work of proselytising, was carried on only by the Buddhists belonging to the Mahāyāna path, it is quite clear that the Mahāyāna path was in existence at that time.

give rise to the Activistic path of Devotion, it is quite clear that there must have been some other contemporary cause outside the Buddhist religion which was responsible for giving to the Buddhist religion this Activistic devotional form, which it. acquired soon after the death of Buddha; and when one considers. what that cause must have been, one cannot but think of the. Bhagavadgītā. Because, out of the other religions which were then in force in India, the Jain and the Upaniṣadic religions, were wholly renunciatory; and although the Pāśupata or Śaiva or other sects of the Vedic religion advocated Devotion, yet, as has been clearly shown by me in the eleventh chapter of the Gītā-Rahasya, Activism has not been harmonised with Devotion, anywhere except in the Bhagavadgītā. In the Gītā, the Blessed Lord has called Himself 'the Most excellent Spirit' (puruṣottama); and there are such statements in the Gītā as "I am the Puruṣottama, Who is the 'father' and 'grand-father' (9. 17) of all "; or, "I am 'equable' towards all, for, to Me none is dear, nor inimical" (9.39); or, "though I am unborn and inexhaustible, yet, I have to take incarnations from time to time for the protection of the religion " (4.6 – 8); or, "however sinful a man may be, he becomes a saint by beginning to worship Me " (9.30); or, "if any flower, leaf, or even a little water, is. offered to me with Devotion, I accept it with pleasure" (9.26); or, "Devotion is a very easy path for persons who have not acquired Knowledge"

etc.; and the doctrine that the Brahman-devoted (brahmaniṣṭha) must accept the Path of Activism has not been expounded in detail anywhere except in the Gītā. Therefore, one is forced to draw the conclusion that, just as the purely renunciatory path of the Destruction of Desire has been taken into the original Buddhistic religion from the Upaniṣads, so also has the principle of Activistic Devotion been adopted into the Mahāyāna sect from the Bhagavadgītā. But, this fact does not rest only in inference; for, it is clearly stated in the book written by the Buddhist, Tārānātha in the Tibetan language, which deals with the history of the Buddhistic religion, that " Rāhulabhadra, the preceptor of Nagarjuna, was a Brahmin converted to Buddhism; and the Jñānin Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Gaṇeśa were responsible for this Rāhulabhadra getting these ideas (of the Mahayana sect)"; and

there is a similar statement in another Tibetan book. [1]] It is true that this book of Tārānātha is not very ancient; but, I need not say that the statements in it have not been made without the authority of ancient works; because, it is not likely that any Buddhist writer will, without any reason, make a reference in this way to saints from another religion in explaining the principles of his own religion. Therefore, the fact that a Buddhist writer has himself, clearly and by name, referred to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is a matter of very great importance; because, as there is no other book in Vedic religion dealing with the path of Activistic Devotion except the Bhagavadgītā written by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, this reference clearly shows that not only the Bhāgavata religion but also the Bhagavadgītā written by Śrī Kṛṣṇa for expounding the Bhāgavata religion, were already in existence before the Mahāyāna sect; and Dr. Kern is of the same opinion. When it is proved that the Gītā existed before the date of the Mahāyāna sect, one can immediately draw the inference that the Mahābhārata must also have then been in

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[1] See Dr. Kern's Manual of Indian Buddhism p. 122 " He (Nāgārjuna) was a pupil of the Brahmana Rāhulabhadra, who himself was a Mahayanist. This Brahmana was much indebted to the sage Krishna and still more to Ganesha. This quasi-historical notice, reduced to its less allegorical expression, means that Mahayanism is much indebted to the Bhagavadgītā, and more even to Shaivism". It would seem that Dr. Kern understands the word 'gaṇeśa' as indicating Śaivism. Dr. Kern has translated the book Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka in the Sacred Books of the East Series; and this opinion has been advocated by him in the Introduction to that book (S. B. E. Vol. XXI. Intro, pp. xxv-xxviii).

existence. It is true that it is stated in Buddhistic treatises that the doctrines expounded by Buddha were collected together immediately after his death. But from that it does not follow that the very ancient Buddhistic treatises which are now available had also been written at that date. The Mahāparinibbāṇa-sutta is considered to be a very ancient treatise out of the now available Buddhistic treatises. But Prof. Rhys-Davids has shown that this book could not have been written for at least a 100 years after the death of Buddha, having regard to

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the reference made in it to the city of Pataliputra; and it is stated in the Vinayapiṭaka, at the end of the Cullavagga, that there had been a second conference of Buddhistic monks a 100 years after the death of Buddha. From this it follows, that the Vinayapiṭaka and other Buddhistic Pali works found in Ceylon, had been written after the date of this conference. [1] It is stated by Buddhist writers themselves that these works were taken there by Mahendra, the son of Aśoka, when he started the preaching of the Buddhistic religion in the Simhaladvīpa (Ceylon) about 341 B. C.; and that they must first have appeared in book-form about 100 to 150 years after that date. It was usual in those times to learn these books by heart,

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[1] See S. B. E. Vol. SI. Intro, pp. xv-xx, and p. 58.

and therefore, even if one assumes that there was no change in them on that account after the date of Mahendra, yet, one cannot say that nothing was added to these treatises from the then available Vedic treatises when they were first prepared, after the death of Buddha, or after that, upto the date of Mahendra or Asoka. Therefore, as it is proved by other evidence also, that the Mahābhārata was certainly in existence at any rate before King Alexander, that is to say, 325 B. C., though it may have been written after the date of Buddha, it is not impossible to find some stanzas from the Mahābhārata in the books taken into Ceylon by Mahendra, as other stanzas are found taken into them from the Manu-Smṛti. It is seen, in short, that seeing that the Buddhistic religion was being propagated after the death of Buddha, ancient Vedic Gathas and traditions came to be collected together in the Mahābhārata; that the stanzas from that work which appear in Buddhistic treatises have been taken by the Buddhist writers from the Mahābhārata; and that the writer of the Mahābhārata did not take those stanzas from Buddhistic works. But even if one assumes for the sake of argument that (a) these stanzas were not taken by the Buddhist writers from the Mahābhārata, but were taken from some other Vedic treatises, which were the basis of the Mahābhārata, but which are not now to be found, and that, (6) on that account, the date of the Mahābhārata cannot be fixed from this similarity of stanzas, yet, the following four facts, namely, (1) principles of Activism . and Devotion

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cannot gradually and naturally be evolved from the un-Ātmic and renunciatory original Buddhistic religion, (2) the specific reference by name to Śrī Kṛṣṇa made by Buddhist writers themselves- in connection with the origin of the Mahāyāna sect, (3) the similarity in meaning and terminology between the Activistic and Devotional doctrines in the Gītā and the doctrines of the Mahāyāna sect, and (4) the absence of Activistic devotional principles in the other Jain or Vedic schools of thought, which were then in existence, prove beyond the slightest doubt, that (i) the Bhāgavata religion was in vogue before the growth of the Mahāyāna sect of Buddhism; that, (ii) the Bhagavadgītā had then become an accepted work on all hands; that, (iii) the Mahāyāna sect has been formed on the authority of this Gītā;. and that (iv) the doctrines enunciated by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the Gītā were not borrowed by Him from Buddhism. The date of the present Gītā which has been fixed by me by reference to the other- pieces of evidence mentioned above is fully consistent with this.

## **PART VII– THE GĪTĀ AND THE CHRISTIAN BIBLE.**

When it has in this way been definitely established, as-mentioned above, that the devotional Bhāgavata religion came into existence in India about 1400 years before Christ, and that the Gītā written by Śrī Kṛṣṇa was, according to the opinion of Buddhist writers themselves, responsible for Activistic Devotional doctrines entering the original renunciatory Buddhistic religion promulgated before the date of Christ, the argument advanced in certain Christian Missionary treatises that, because many of the doctrines of the Gītā are to be found in the Christian Bible, that is, in the New Testament, these doctrines must have been taken into the Gītā from the Christian religion, and especially the statements made by Dr. Laurincer in his German translation of the Gītā, published in 1869, will necessarily be seen to be absolutely false. Dr. Laurincer has shown at the end of his book (that is, of his German translation of the Gītā) more than a hundred cases of similarity of words between the Bhagavadgītā and the Bible, and principally the New Testament For instance, the sentence "At that day, ye shall know that I am in my father, and ye in me, and I in you" (John. 14.20), is not only similar in meaning but also almost word for word the same as the following sentences from

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the Gītā, namely, "yena bhūtāny aśeṣeṇa drakṣyasi ātmany atho mayi" (i.e., "by this Knowledge, you will realise that all



beings are in you, and also in Me "~Translator.), (Gī. 4 35), and "yo mam paśyati sarvatra sarvaṁ ca mayi paśyati", (i.e., "he who sees that I, the Parameśvara Paramātmā am everywhere, and sees all beings in Me "~Translator.). Similarly, the sentence "he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father and will love him" (John 14.21) is in every way similar to the sentence "priyo hi jñānino 'tyartham ahaṁ sa ca mama priyaḥ" (i.e., "I am much beloved of the Jñānin, and I too love (much) the Jñānin" ~Translator.), (Gī. 7.17). From this and many other similar sentences, Dr. Laurincer has drawn the conclusion that the writer of the Gītā knew about the Bible; and he has said that the Gītā must have been written about 500 years after the Bible. An English translation of this portion of the work of Dr. Laurincer had been published in Vol. II. of the Indian Antiquary; and the late Mr. Telang has, in the introduction to his versified translation of the Bhagavadgītā, fully refuted that argument [1]. Dr. Laurincer is not looked upon as a Western Sanskritist, and his knowledge and pride of the Christian religion was more than his knowledge of the Gītā. Therefore, his opinions have not been accepted not only by the late Mr. Telang, but also by important Western Sanskritists like Max Müller and others. That all the statements made by him, showing hundreds of similarities of ideas and words between the Gītā and the Bible, would turn round on him like ghosts,

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[1] See Bhagavadgītā translated into English blank verse, with notes etc. by K. T. Telang 1875 (Bombay). This book is different from the translation in the Sacred Books of the East Series by the same author.

when once it was proved that the Gītā was earlier than Christ, had possibly never entered the head of poor Laurincer! But the saying that, things which one does not see even in one's dreams, sometimes actually happen, is true;; and, really speaking, it is not even necessary now to give any reply to the arguments of Dr. Laurincer. Yet, as these false opinions of Dr. Laurincer are seen being repeated in authoritative English works, it is necessary to mention here in short what has now been found, after modern researches in this matter. It must first be borne in mind that from the mere fact

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that there are similar doctrines in two different books, one cannot definitely determine which' book was written first and which afterwards. Because, there arise the two possibilities that (1) the ideas in the first book may have been taken from the second book, or (2) the ideas; in the second book may have been taken from the first book. Therefore, after one has first independently determined the dates of two books, one has to subsequently decide who has taken from whom. Besides, as it is not impossible that similar thoughts should strike two writers in two different countries independently of each other, whether at the same time or at different times, one has, in considering the similarity between the two books also to consider whether or not that similarity could have arisen in an independent way; and whether or not there was

any mutual intercourse between the two countries in which these two books were written, and, on that account, a chance of these ideas having gone from one country to the other. When once the matter has been considered from all points of view, it is not only impossible that anything should have been taken into the Gītā from the Bible, but on the other hand, it will be seen to be perfectly possible that such of the doctrines enunciated in the Christian Bible as are similar to those in the Gītā, must have been taken into the Bible from Buddhism – that is, ultimately from the Gītā, or from the Vedic religion– by Christ or by His disciples; and some Western scholars have now begun even to openly say so. When in this way, orthodox Christians saw that the scales were turned against them, it is no wonder that they were greatly surprised about the matter, and felt inclined to flatly deny this fact. But all that I have to say to such persons is that, as this question is not religious, but historical, the only logical and honest thing which everyone – and especially those who have themselves raised the question of the similarity of ideas – can do, is to joyfully and impartially accept all the inferences which can be drawn according to ordinary: historical methods from the material which has now become available to us.

The New Testament has been written as an improvement on the Jewish religion propounded in the Jewish Bible, that is to say, in the Old Testament of the Bible. God is known in the Jewish language as 'Iloha' (Ilāha, in Arabic); but according

to the rules made by Moses, the principal deity of worship in the Jewish religion has been given the special name of 'Jehovah'. Western scholars themselves have now proved that the word 'Jehovah' is not an original Jewish word, but has come from the Chaldean word 'yavhe' (in Sanskrit, yavha). Jews are not idolaters. The principal observance of their religion consists in pleasing the Jehovah by sacrificing animals or other things into the fire, and following the code of religion and morality laid down by God, and thereby obtaining the happiness of themselves and of their community in this world. To mention the matter in short, the Jewish religion is Activistic and ritualistic like the Vedic Karma-kāṇḍa. Christ has, on the other hand, preached in numerous places that, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice" (Matthew 9.13); "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon" (Matthew 6.24); "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast and come and follow me" (Matthew 19.21); and when He sent His disciples to different countries for propagating His religion, He told them: "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves" etc., (Matthew 10.9 – 13), and asked them to follow other similar rules of Renunciation. It is true that the modern Christian countries have coolly shelved this preaching of Christ. But, just as the cult of Śaṅkarācārya does not become a cult of royal

pleasure, because, the present Śaṁkarācārya owns- elephants and horses, so also can we not, on account of this- behaviour of the Western Christian countries, say that the original Christian religion supported Activism. Just as,, though the original Vedic religion was based on ritualistic- performances (Karma-kāṇḍa), the Path of Knowledge (Jñāna- kāṇḍa) later on sprang out of it, so also are the Jewish and the Christian religions mutually inter-related. But, the Christian, religion did not gradually come out of the Jewish religion, as the Jñāna- kāṇḍa, and later on, the Devotional Bhāgavata religion, came out of the original ritualistic Karma-kāṇḍa in hundreds of years. History tells us that a sect of ascetics called ESI or ESIN suddenly came from somewhere into the Jewish countries about 200; years at most before Christ. Although these Esis belonged to the Jewish religion, yet

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they had given up sacrificial ritual, and used to spend their lives in a peaceful place in contemplation of the Almighty, and they used at most to take part in harmless occupations like agriculture etc. for maintaining themselves. The most prominent principles of this sect were to remain celibates, to eschew meat and liquor, not to kill animals, not to take oaths, and to live together socially in monasteries; and, if any one of them acquired any property, to look upon that property as the common property of the society; and if anyone had a desire to

enter their sect, it was necessary for him to serve as an apprentice for at least three years, and after that to consent to observe certain rules. Their monastery was at Endgi on the western coast of the Dead Sea, and they used to live there peacefully and as ascetics. The respectful references made by Christ Himself and His disciples in the New Testament to the opinions of the Esi sect (Matthew 5.34; 19.12; James 5.12; The Acts 4.32 – 35), clearly show that Jesus Christ was a follower of this sect, and He has to a great extent furthered the renunciatory religion of this sect. But though the renunciatory devotional path of Christ is in this way traced to the Esi sect, still it is necessary to give some satisfactory explanation from the historical point of view, as to how the renunciatory Esi path suddenly came into existence out of the original Activistic Jewish religion. Some answer this question by saying that Christ did not belong to the Esi sect. But though this statement is taken as correct, one cannot in that way escape the questions, (i) what was the origin of the renunciatory religion preached in the New Testament of the Bible, and (ii) how such a religion suddenly entered the Activistic Jewish religion; for, the only difference is, that instead of having to explain the origin of the Esi sect, one has to answer these two questions; because, nothing comes into existence anywhere suddenly. It grows gradually, and the growth starts from a much earlier period; and it is a well-established rule of Sociology, that where such a growth is not noticed, the matter is usually found to have been adopted from a foreign country or from a foreign

people. It is not that the former Christian writers had not realised this difficulty; but before Europeans had come to know about Buddhism, that is to say, upto the 18th century

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of the Christian era, Christian research scholars were of the opinion, that the renunciatory doctrines of the Esi sect must have entered the Activistic Jewish religion, as a result of the philosophy of the Greeks, and especially of Pythagoras, after an intimate relationship had been established between the Greeks .and the Jews. Recent researches prove this inference to be false. Yet, this shows that the idea, that it was not naturally possible for the Esi or Christian renunciatory religion to have come out of the ritualistic Jewish religion, and that there must have been some reason for it which was outside the Jewish religion, is not a new idea; and that this idea had been accepted as correct by Christian scholars before the 18th century.

Colebrooke has said that there is a great deal of similarity between the philosophy of Pythagoras and that of Buddhism [1]; and therefore, if the above theory is accepted, the parentage of the Esi sect naturally comes to be traced to India; but it is also not now necessary to mince matters about this

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[1] See Colebrooke's Miscellaneous Essays, Vol. I. pp. 399, 400.

question. It will be seen by a comparison of the Buddhistic religious works with the New Testament of the Bible that the similarity between not only the Esi religion but also the life of Christ and the preachings of Christ on the one hand and the Buddhism on the other hand, is a hundred times greater than the similarity between the Esi or the Christian religion and Pythagorian philosophers. Just as the Devil tried to tempt Christ, and just as Christ fasted for forty days when He acquired the state of a Siddha (perfect man), so also did Māra tempt Buddha, and Buddha on that occasion fasted for forty-nine days (seven weeks) as has been stated in the biography of Buddha. In the same way, performing by the force of Faith alone such things as walking on water, making one's face or body suddenly appear brilliant like the Sun, or redeeming even thieves or prostitutes, who had surrendered themselves, are similar in the case of Buddha and of Christ; and the principal moral precepts of Christ, such as, "Love thy neighbour", or "Love thy enemies" etc., will sometimes be found to have been given word for word, before the date of Christ, in the Buddhistic religion. The philosophy of Devotion did not originally form part of Buddhism. But, as has been stated above, that principle had

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been adopted by the Mahayana Buddhist sect at least 200 to 300 years before Christ, from the Bhagavadgītā. But Mr. Arthur



Lilly has authoritatively shown in his books that this similarity does not exist only as regards these things, but that there are hundreds of other small and big incidents, in which there is a similar similarity between the Christian and the Buddhist religions. Nay, the symbol of the Cross, which has become sacred to Christians on account of the fact that Christ was crucified on a Cross, had also become a holy symbol in the Vedic and Buddhistic religions in the shape of a 'svastika', hundreds of years before Christ; and modern research scholars have proved that not only in Egypt and other countries in the ancient continents of the earth, but even in Peru and Mexico in America, the svastika was looked upon as an auspicious sign many centuries before Columbus [1]. From this one has to draw the conclusion, that the svastika sign, which had become a matter of regard and reverence long, before the date of Christ, was made use of in one particular way by the devotees of Christ. There is also a great deal of similarity between the Buddhist monks and the old Christian missionaries (specially the earliest preachers) so far as their dress and religious observances are concerned. For instance, the ceremony of initiation after a bath, that is to say 'baptism', was in vogue long before the date of Christ; and it has now been proved that Buddhist monks had wholly adopted the procedure of sending religious preachers to different countries and thus propagating their religion, long before the date of Christian missionaries.

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[1] See, *The Secret of the Pacific* by C. Reginald Enoch, 1912,. pp. 248-252.

It is quite natural for a thinking person to ask himself why there should be such a strange and comprehensive similarity between the lives and the moral preachings of Buddha and Christ,, and also between the religious observances of both these religions. [1]

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this similarity first came to the notice of Western scholars by the study of Buddhistic treatises, some Christian scholars began to say that Buddhists must have adopted these principles from the Asiatic Christian sect known as the 'Nestorian' sect. But such a thing is absolutely impossible; because, the founder of the Nestorian sect himself came into existence about 425 years after Christ, whereas Buddha was born about 500 years before Christ, that is to say, nearly 900 years before Nestor; and it has now been established beyond doubt from the stone inscriptions of Asoka that in his times,

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[1] Mr. Arthur Lily has written a separate book on this subject called Buddhism in Christendom; and he has also briefly expressed Us opinion in the last four chapters of his book, Buddha and Buddhism. The exposition made by me in this part of the Appendix, has been made principally on the authority of this book. The book Buddha and Buddhism was published in 1900 in The World's Epoch Makers Series; and in the tenth part of that book, about 50 similarities between the Buddhist and the Christian religions have been shown.

that is to say, at least 250 years before the Christian era, Buddhism was followed to a very large extent in India and in the surrounding countries, and works containing the life of Buddha etc. had also been written. The ancientness of the Buddhistic religion being in this way undoubtable, there remain only two possible conclusions regarding the similarity to be seen between the Christian and the Buddhistic religions, namely, that (1) this similarity must have arisen in the two places independently of each other, or that (2) these principles must have been taken by Christ or His disciples from Buddhism. Prof. Rhys-Davids says that this similarity has arisen as a result of the similarity between the circumstances of both Christ and Buddha, and that it has arisen in both the places naturally and independently [1]. But anyone will realise after a little consideration that this solution is not satisfactory; because, when anything comes into existence anywhere independently, it grows very gradually, and we can also see the course of the growth. For instance, we can logically show the gradual growth of the Jñāna-kāṇḍa out of the Karma-kāṇḍa, and also how the philosophy of Devotion, the Pātāñjala-Yoga, and ultimately 'the Buddhistic religion grew gradually out of the Jñāna-kāṇḍa, that is, from the Upaniṣads. But the renunciatory Esi or Christian religions have not grown in the same way from the Activistic Jewish

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[1] See Buddhist Suttas, S. B. E. Series, Vol. XI, p. 163.

religion. And I have stated above that modern Christian scholars have now admitted the position that the Christian religion came into existence suddenly, and that there was some cause outside the Jewish religion which was responsible for its having done so. Besides, the similarity between the Christian and the Buddhistic religions is so strange and so complete, that it is impossible for such a similarity to arise in an independent way. It would be different if it could be proved that it was totally impossible for Jewish people to have come to know anything about Buddhism. But history clearly proves that after the date of Alexander – and certainly at the date of Asoka (that is, at least 250 years before Christ)– Buddhist monks had found their way to Alexandria in Egypt, and Greece, in the east of Europe. It is stated in one Aśokan stone inscription itself that Asoka had entered into a treaty with Antiochus, who was a Greek king ruling over the Jewish and the surrounding countries. In the same way, there is a statement in the Bible itself, that learned persons had travelled into Jerusalem from the East when Christ was born (Matthew 2.1). Christians say that these sages were Magis, belonging to the Iranian religion, and not from India. But whatever is said, the meaning is the same. Because, history clearly tells us that long before this date, Buddhism had spread to Kashmir and Kabul, and that it had travelled to the East of

Europe as far as Iran and Turkey. Besides, Plutarch himself has clearly recorded [1] that a monk from India used to come every

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year to the shore of the Red Sea, that is to say, somewhere near Alexandria during the life of Christ. In short, there is now no doubt whatsoever that Buddhist monks had started entering Jewish countries two or three hundred years before Christ; and once the fact of this intercourse is admitted, it naturally follows that Buddhism was principally responsible for the renunciatory Esi religion, and later on, for the renunciatory and devotional Christian religion finding entry into the Jewish countries. The English writer Lilly has drawn this very

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[1] See Plutarch's *Morals – Theosophical Essays*, translated by C. N. King (George Bell & Sons), pp. 96 and 97. There is a reference in the *Mahāvamśa* written in the Pali language (29,39) to a Greek, that is, yavana town named Alasandā (yona-nagarā 'lasandā); and it is stated there that some years before the Christian era, while the work of building a temple was going on in Ceylon, many Buddhist monks had gone from that place to Ceylon for the celebration. The English translator of the *Mahāvamśa* says that a town named Alasandā established by Alexander in Kabul is meant in this place, and not Alexandria in Egypt. But this is not correct; because, this small place would not have been referred to by anybody as a city of yavanas. Besides, the stone inscription of Asoka mentioned above, itself contains a clear reference to Buddhist monks having been sent to the, kingdom of the yavanas.

inference; and he has mentioned in his book the similar opinions of the French scholars Emile Bournouff and Rosni in support of his opinion [1]; and Prof. Sedan, who was the Professor of Philosophy at Leipzig University in Germany, has also expressed the same opinion in his books on this subject. The German Professor Schroeder has said in one of his Essays that the Christian religion is not exactly similar to Buddhism; that, though there may be a similarity between the two in some matters, there is a great deal of dissimilarity in other matters; and that, therefore, the opinion that the Christian religion was derived from the Buddhistic religion cannot be accepted. But, as this statement is irrelevant, it does not carry any weight whatsoever. It is nobody's case that the Christian and Buddhistic religions are similar to each other in all respects; because, if such were the case, nobody would have said that these two religions are, different from each other. The principal question is, what was the reason for the renunciatory devotional Christian religion being promulgated as an improvement on the fundamentally purely Activistic Jewish religion; and when one thinks of the history of the Buddhist religion, which was undoubtedly more ancient than the Christian religion, it does not appear .historically logical to say that the renunciatory principles of Ethics and Devotion in Christianity were discovered by Christ independently. There is no information to be found in the Bible as to what Christ was doing from the 12th to the 30th year of His life, or where He

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[1] See Lilly's Buddha and Buddhism pp. 158 ff.

was during that period. And it is quite clear that He must have spent this time in the acquisition of knowledge, in religious meditation, and in travel. Therefore, it is impossible to say definitely

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that He could not have come into contact, directly or indirectly, with Buddhist monks during this period of His life; because, the activities of Buddhist monks had at that date gone as far as Greece. There is a clear statement in a book to be found in a Buddhist monastery in Nepal that Jesus Christ had at that time come to India, and that He there acquired the knowledge of Buddhism. This book was found by a Russian named Nicholas Notovisch, and he published a translation of it into the French language in 1894. Many Christian scholars say, that though the translation of Notovisch may be correct,, the original book itself is a fraud written by someone; and I too am not very emphatic on the position that these scholars should accept that book as authentic. Whether the book found, by Notovisch was reliable or not, it will be quite clear from the dissertation made by me above that, from the purely historical: point of view, it was not impossible, at least for the disciples of Christ who wrote His life in the New Testament,, if not for Christ Himself, to have become acquainted with Buddhism; and if this position is not improbable, it does not appear logical to say that the strange similarity to be found

between the lives or the preachings of Christ and Buddha, was- something which came into existence independently [1]. In short,, the purely ritualistic path of the Mīmāṃsakas, the Knowledge- Action (naiṣkarmya) path of Janaka and others, the Path of Knowledge and Renunciation of the writers of the Upaniṣads and the Sāṃkhya philosophers, the Pātañjala Yoga in the shape of 'Concentration of the Mind', and the Pañcarātra or the Bhāgavata religion, that is, the Philosophy of Devotion, are all religious paths which grew originally from the ancient Vedic- religion. Leaving aside, out of these, the Path of the Knowledge of the Brahman, the Path of Energism, and the Path of Devotion,. Buddha has preached his renunciatory religion to the four castes, on the basis of the philosophy of (i) Yoga in the form of 'Concentration of the Mind', and (ii) Karma-Saṃnyāsa

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(Abandonment of Action); but the supporters and followers of Buddha, later on added to his religion the principles of Devotion and of Desireless Action, and spread this reformed Buddhistic religion on all sides. After the Buddhistic religion had in this way spread everywhere at the date of Aśoka, the

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[1] The same is the opinion of Mr. Rameshchandra Dutt, and he has expressed it in detail in his book. See Rameshchandra Dutt's History of Civilisation in Ancient India Vol, II, Chapter XX pp. 828-340.



principles of Renunciation began to find a way into the purely Activistic Jewish religion; and Christ ultimately added to it the Philosophy of Devotion, and established His own religion. When one gives proper weight to this gradual growth, which is established by historical facts, one comes to the definite conclusion that far from the Gītā having taken something from the Christian religion, as suggested by Dr. Laurincer, there is a very strong probability, and almost a certainty, that the principles of Self- Identification, Renunciation, Non-Enmity, and Devotion, to be found in the New Testament of the Bible, must have been taken into the Christian religion from Buddhism, and therefore, indirectly from the Vedic religion; and that, Indians had no need to look to other people for finding these religious principles. I have in this way considered the seven questions mentioned by me at the beginning of this Appendix. Other important questions such as, what was the effect of the Bhagavadgītā on the Path of Devotion now followed in India etc., arise in the train of these questions. But, instead of saying that these questions have a bearing on the Gītā, one must say that they deal with the ancient history of the Hindu religion. For this reason, and principally because this Appendix has been lengthened out beyond my expectations, although I have attempted to make it as short as possible, I shall now finish this External Examination of the Gītā.

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**THE ORIGINAL STANZAS  
OF  
THE GĪTĀ  
WITH TRANSLATION AND  
COMMENTARY.**



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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

I have explained in detail in the various chapters of the Gītā-Rahasya, that (i) the highest benefit of every human being in this world and in the next, lies in first acquiring as much Equability of Reason (*buddhi*) as possible by Knowledge and Faith, but withal and principally, by the easy and royal road of Devotion, and thereafter doing his duties till death, desirelessly, according to his own religion, in the interests of universal welfare; that (ii) it is not necessary, to give up Action or to practise any religious austerities for attaining Release; and that (iii) this is the sum and substance of the Gītā-Religion. In the same way, I have shown in the fourteenth chapter of this book the clear continuity of the eighteen chapters of the Gītā from this point of view, as also which parts of the other methods of attaining Release have been included in the Activistic religion of the Gītā, and how. When the whole matter has been thrashed out in this way, there remains really nothing to be done beyond giving the plain translation of the stanzas in the Gītā, according to my rendering of them, in their proper order, in the Marathi vernacular. But, it was not possible for me to show in the general Exposition in the Gītā-Rahasya how the subject-matter of each chapter of the Gītā has been divided, or how commentators have stretched the meanings of certain words in the stanzas for supporting their

particular doctrine. Therefore, taking both these matters into consideration, I have thought it necessary to give some notes, in the shape of a commentary, immediately after the translation of each stanza, in order that the prior and subsequent context should be understood on the spot. Nevertheless, in these commentaries, I have only touched in passing on those matters, which have been fully dealt with in the Gītā-Rahasya, and I have given the reference to the particular chapter of the Gītā-Rahasya in which that particular subject-matter has been dealt with. In order to enable the reader to distinguish these commentaries from the original matter, I have enclosed them within square brackets, thus, [],

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and put a dotted line by the side. [1] I have translated the stanzas as far as possible literally, and in several places I have retained the original word in the translation, and given after it its meaning in Marathi, saying 'that is, so and so'; [2] and I have thus included in the translation itself, what would otherwise have to be given as small foot-notes. Even though this has

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[1] Instead of using a dotted margin for distinguishing the commentary, as was done by the author, I have made the distinction by putting the commentary within square brackets, and using a different type.  
~Translator.

[2] This, too, too been placed by me within round brackets, thus, (), though in the original author's text, it is not within brackets. ~Translator.

been done, it has also become necessary to add some words here and there in the translation, in order to give the complete meaning of the original Sanskrit stanza in Marathi, on account of the difference between the Sanskrit and the Marathi idiom; and very often, the word used in the original has also to be given in the translation by way of reference. In order to distinguish these additional words, I have placed them within round brackets, thus, (). In Sanskrit books, the number of the stanza is always given at the end. But, in the translation I have given it in the beginning. So that, if someone wants to find out the translation of a particular stanza, he must refer to what follows the figure showing the number of the stanza. I have arranged the translation in such a way that, if one reads only the translation, omitting the commentaries, there is no break in the sense. Similarly, where a sentence has been finished in the original in more than one-stanza, I have completed its purport in the translation of the same number of stanzas. Therefore, the translation of some of the stanzas has to be read in continuity. Where such stanzas occur, I have not placed a full stop at the end of the translation of the stanza. Still, it must not be forgotten that a translation will be a translation in any case. It is true that I have attempted to bring out the plain, broad, and principal meaning of the Gītā in the translation; yet, it is impossible to transport into the translation, by means of other words, and just as it is, the power of metaphorically creating numerous figurative meanings, which exists in Sanskrit words, and especially in the loving, sweet, and

exhaustive speech of the Blessed Lord, "giving new pleasures at every step". Evidently, one who merely reads the Marathi translation cannot make a metaphorical use of the stanzas in the Gītā on various occasions, as can be done by a person who understands the Sanskrit language. Nay, there is very often a chance of such a person making mistakes. It is, therefore, my earnest entreaty to everybody that, whoever can do so, should not fail to study the original Gītā in Sanskrit; and that is one of the reasons why I have given the original stanza side by side with the translation. In order that it should be convenient to grasp the subject-matter of each chapter of the Gītā, I have given separately, in the beginning, the contents showing all these subjects, according to stanzas, and in the order of the chapters, on the basis of the groups of sections adopted in the Vedānta-Sūtras. If one does not read each stanza separately, but reads the groups of stanzas as a whole by reference to this index, the present misunderstanding about the import of the Gītā will to a considerable extent be reduced; because, the different meanings of some stanzas which have been given by doctrine-supporting commentators, who have stretched the meaning of the stanzas for proving their doctrines, have been usually given, disregarding this previous and subsequent context. (For example, see my commentary on Gī. 3.19; 6.3; and 18.2). Considering the matter from this point of view, it



may well be said that this translation of the Gītā and the Gītā-Rahasya are mutually complementary. And he who wishes to fully understand what I want to say, must read both these parts. As it is usual to learn by heart the whole of the Gītā, one does not come across important variant readings in it. Nevertheless, I must state here that I have accepted as genuine the text of the Gītā as given in the Śāṅkarabhāṣya, which is the most ancient of Bhāṣyas on the Gītā now available.

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# Detailed Contents Showing the Subjects

**mentioned in the various chapters of the Gītā, according to the stanzas.**

Note: The divisions of the various subjects in the different chapters of the Gītā, which have been made in these contents according to the stanzas, have been shown in the, original stanzas printed further on by the sign §§ printed at the beginning of the stanza; and, in the translation, a separate paragraph has been started from that stanza.

## CHAPTER I – ARJUNA-VIŚĀDA YOGA.

(The Yoga of the Dejection of Arjuna).

1.1. The question of Dhṛtarāṣṭra to Sañjaya.

1.2 – 11. The description given by Duryodhana to Droṇācārya of the armies on either side.

1.12–19. The blowing of conches by way of greetings to each other in the beginning of the war.

1.20 – 27. The survey of the army after the chariot of Arjuna has been brought forward.

1.28 – 37. The dejection of Arjuna at seeing his own relatives in both the armies, and realising that the generation will become extinct by their being killed.

1.38 – 44. The results of sins like extinction of the kula (family).

1.45 – 47. The decision of Arjuna not to fight, and his throwing away his bow and arrows.

## **CHAPTER II – SĀMĀKHYA YOGA.**

(The Yoga according to the Sāmkhya system).

2.1 – 3. The encouragement given by Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

2.4 – 10. The reply of Arjuna, his doubt as to his own duty, and his surrendering himself to Śrī Kṛṣṇa for an elucidation of what his dharma (duty) was.

2.11 – 13. The non-lamentability of the Ātman.

2.14 – 15. The inconstancy of the Body; and, of pain and happiness.

2.16 – 25. The discernment between the Real (sat) and the Unreal (asat), and the justification of the non-lamentability of the Ātman by the description of the immortality, and other features, of the Ātman.

2.26, 27. The reply, on the basis of the immortality of the Ātman.

[2.28](#). The inconstancy and non-lamentability of the perceptible creation according to the Sāṃkhya system.

[2.29, 30](#). it is true that the Ātman is difficult to Realise, but you should

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acquire true Knowledge, and give up lamentation.

[2.31 – 38](#). The necessity of warfare according to the religion of the Kṣatriyas.

[2.39](#). The conclusion of the argument on the basis of the Sāṃkhya system, and the beginning of the argument on the basis of Karma-Yoga.

[2.40](#). Even a little observance of Karma-Yoga is beneficial. 41. The steadying of the Discerning (vyavasāyātmikā) Reason.

[2.42 – 44](#). A description of the unsteadiness of Mind of the followers of the Mīmāṃsā school, who are engrossed in the Karma-kāṇḍa (ritual).

[2.45, 46](#) The advice to perform Action with a steady and concentrated (yogastha) Reason.

[2.47](#). The four canons (catuḥ-sūtrī) of the Karma-Yoga.

[2.48 – 50](#). The nature of Karma-Yoga, and the superiority of the Reason of the Doer (kartā) over the Action (karma).

[2.51 – 53](#). Release, by following the Karma-Yoga.

[2.54 – 70](#). A description of the qualities of the Sthitaprajña in reply to the question of Arjuna, including, as occasion arises, a description of the growth of Desire (kāma), Anger (krodha), and other emotions, as a result of Attachment (āśakti) to the objects of pleasure.

[2.71, 72](#). The Brāhmī state.

### **CHAPTER III – KARMA-YOGA.**

(The Yoga of Right Action).

[3.1, 2](#). "Should Action (ritual) be abandoned or performed; what is the truth?", being the question asked by Arjuna.

[3.3 – 8](#). The definite advice to Arjuna that, although there are the two paths (niṣṭhā), (i) Sāṃkhya (karma-saṁnyāsa or Abandonment of Action) and (ii) Karma-Yoga, yet, as nobody can escape Karma (Action), Karma-Yoga is superior, and the path to be followed.

[3.9 – 16](#). The advice to perform even the sacrificial ritual of the Mīmāṃsā school after abandoning Attachment; the antiquity of the Yajña-cakra (cycle of sacrificial ritual), and the necessity of it, for the continuance and maintenance of the world.

[3.17 – 19](#). In as much as the Jñānin (one who has acquired Knowledge) has no more any self-interest left, he must perform all Action, which befalls him, with a disinterested, that is, desireless frame of mind; because, no one can escape Karma (action or ritual).

[3.20 – 24](#). The illustration of Janaka and others; the importance of universal welfare (lokasaṁgraha), and the illustration of the Blessed Lord Himself.

[3.25 – 29](#). The difference between the

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Actions of the Jñānin and the Ajñānin (one who is ignorant); and, the necessity for one, who has acquired Knowledge, to give an illustration of righteous action, to the one who has not acquired Knowledge, by his own conduct in performing Action desirelessly.

[3.30](#). The advice to Arjuna to perform warfare like a Jñānin, that is, with the intention of dedicating it to the Parameśvara.

[3.31, 32](#). The result of performing Action, by Faith, according to this advice of the Blessed Lord, and of not doing so. 33, 34. The overpowering influence of Prakṛti, and the control of the organs.

[3.35](#). The Desireless Action to be performed, should be according to the duty prescribed for the doer, even if one meets his death in the performance of such Action.

[3.36 – 41](#). Desire (kāma) compels a man to commit sin in spite of his Will; and, the destruction of that Desire by the control of the organs.

[3.42, 43](#). The order of superiority among the organs; and, the control of the organs by means of the Knowledge of the Ātman.

## **CHAPTER IV – JÑĀNA-KARMA-SAMNYĀSA YOGA.**

(The Yoga of Jñāna, and Abandonment of Action).

[4.1 – 3](#). The doctrinal tradition of Karma-Yoga.

[4.4 – 8](#). An explanation of why, when, and how the Parameśvara, Who is free from birth, takes transcendental births or incarnations by Māyā.

[4.9, 10](#). Reincarnation is escaped from, and the Blessed Lord is reached, by understanding the principle underlying these transcendental births and Karma. 1

[4.11, 12](#). If the worship is performed in some other way, the Fruit obtained, is relative to the worship; e. g. worship of deities for obtaining Fruit relating to this life.

[4.13 – 15](#). The unbinding (nirlepa) Action of the Blessed Lord relating to the four castes; the destruction of the bond of Action by understanding the underlying principle; and the advice to perform Action (karma) accordingly.

[4.16 – 23](#). The difference between 'karma' (Action), 'akarma' (Non-Action), and 'vikarma' (Wrong Action); akarma means unattached-Action; that, is the correct Karma; and, the bond of Karma is destroyed only by such Action.

[4.24 – 33](#). Description of various kinds of Metaphorical Yajñas (sacrifices); and the superiority of the Sacrifice performed with the 'brahma-buddhi'; that is, of the 'Jñāna-Yajña'.

[4.34 – 37](#). Advice about Knowledge

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from one who has acquired Knowledge; Self-Identification; and, the annihilation of sin or merit by Knowledge.

[4.38 – 40](#). The means of acquiring Knowledge; buddhi (-Yoga) and śraddhā (Faith); ruin, in the absence of these.

[4.41, 42](#). A description of the individual uses of (Karma-) Yoga and Jñāna (Knowledge), and the advice to engage in warfare with the help of both.

## **CHAPTER V – SAṂNYĀSA-YOGA.**

(The Yoga of Renunciation).

[5.1](#). The direct question of Arjuna whether Saṁnyāsa (Renunciation) or Karma-Yoga is superior. The definite answer of the Blessed Lord, that though both lead to Release, Karma-Yoga is superior.

[5.3 – 6](#). By giving up Desire, the Karma-Yogin becomes a nitya-saṁnyāsin (a perpetual ascetic); and Saṁnyāsa (renunciation)



itself is not successful without Karma (Action); therefore, both are the same in principle.

5.7 – 13. As the mind of the Karma-Yogin is always in a state of Renunciation and his Actions are only the actions of the organs, he is always unattached, peaceful, and Released.

5.14, 15. The real Activity, and Enjoyment is of Matter (prakṛti), but as a result of ignorance, it is supposed to be that of the Ātman or of the Parameśvara.

5.16, 17. Release from re-birth as a result of the annihilation of this ignorance.

5.18 – 23. A description of the Equability of vision, the steadiness of the Reason, and the indifference towards pain or happiness, resulting from brahmajñāna (Knowledge of the Brahman).

5.24 – 28. The Karma-Yogin is always brahma-bhūta (merged in the Brahman), samādhista (mentally absorbed) and mukta (Released) in this very life, though he may be performing Action for the benefit of the entire creation.

5.29. The result of Realising that the Parameśvara is the recipient of all Yajña (sacrificial ritual) and tapa (austerities), (though He does not take on Himself the Doership), and that He is the friend of the whole creation.

## **CHAPTER VI – DHYĀNA-YOGA.**

(The Yoga of Meditation).

[6.1, 2](#). The one who performs Action without entertaining any Hope of Fruit (phalāśā) is the true Saṁnyāsin or Yogin;

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'Saṁnyāsin' does not mean one who is niragni (one -who does not perform Fire-Worship, or other ritualistic Action), and akriya (one who performs no Action at all).

[6.3, 4](#). The mutual interchange of kārya (Result), and kāraṇa (Cause) of śama (Abandonment) and karma (Action) in the 'siddhāvasthā' (perfect state), and the sādhanāvasthā (preparatory stage) of the Karma-Yogin; and the characteristic feature of the Yogārūḍha (one who is installed in Yoga).

[6.5, 6](#). The freedom of the Ātman to success-fully acquire Yoga.

[6.7 – 9](#). Even among the jitātman-yogayukta (those who have conquered Self and are steeped in Yoga), the one who has attained Equability of Reason is the best.

[6.10 – 17](#). A description of the bodily postures (āsana), and food, and recreation, necessary for yoga-sādhana (the successful practice of Yoga).

[6.18 – 23](#). A description of the Yogin, and of the beatific happiness of the yoga-samadhi (mental absorption resulting from Yoga).

[6.24 – 26](#). How to gradually make the Mind, Absorbed (samādhista), Peaceful (śānta), and Self-devoted (ātmaniṣṭha).

[6.27, 28](#). The Yogin alone is 'Merged in the Brahman' (brahmabhūta) and intensely happy.

[6.29 – 32](#). The Self-Identification of the Yogin with the entire creation.

[6.33 – 36](#). The control of the restless Mind by Practice (abhyāsa), and by Indifference to worldly affairs (vairāgya).

[6.37 – 45](#). A description of how the yoga-bhraṣṭa (one who has abandoned the practice of Karma-Yoga), or the jijñāsu (one who has got the desire to understand what the Karma-Yoga is) acquires growing merit, birth after birth, and ultimately complete Release, given in reply to the question of Arjuna.

[6.46, 47](#). The Karma-Yogins, and among them those who are Devout, are better than the tapasvins (those who perform religious austerities), the Jñānins (the scientists), and mere Karmins (those who merely perform Action or Ritual); and, the advice to Arjuna to become a (Karma-) Yogin.

## **CHAPTER VII – JÑĀNA-VIJÑĀNA YOGA.**

(The Yoga of Spiritual and Worldly Knowledge).

[7.1 – 3](#). The beginning of the disquisition on Jñāna (Spiritual Knowledge) and Vijñāna (worldly knowledge), for the

attainment of Karma-Yoga; the rarity of persons who make an effort to attain Karma-Yoga.

[7.4 – 7](#). Consideration of the kṣara (perishable) and the akṣara (imperishable); the eight-fold

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aparā-prakṛti (inferior material manifestation), and the (para-prakṛti (superior material manifestation), in the shape of Jīva, of the Blessed Lord; and the further development of everything out of it.

[7.8 – 12](#). A brief survey of the form of the Parameśvara, which pervades the sāttvika (equable) and other divisions of that development.

[7.13 – 15](#). This is the qualityful (guṇamayi) and insuperable (dustara) Māyā (Illusion) of the Parameśvara; and the overcoming of that Māyā by surrendering oneself to the Parameśvara.

[7.16 – 19](#). Devotees are of four kinds; and the Jñānin is the most superior among them. The completion of Jñāna (Knowledge) after innumerable births, and the permanent fruit in the shape of assimilation with the Blessed Lord.

[7.20 – 23](#). The worship of deities in the hope of obtaining non-permanent objects of Desire; but even there, the Blessed Lord wields the power to give fruit or benefit according to one's Faith in the Blessed Lord.

[7.24 – 28](#). The real form of the Blessed Lord is imperceptible (avyakta); but that form becomes difficult of Realisation on account of 'Māyā' (Illusion): the mental confusion about the couples of opposites (dvaṁdva); and the Realisation of the true form of the Parameśvara by the destruction of the confusion created by Māyā.

[7.29, 30](#). Ultimate Acquisition of Knowledge by Realising that the Brahman, the adhyātma (Absolute Self), karma (Action), the adhi-bhūta (absolute Matter), adhi-daiva (the highest Deity), and adhi-yajña. (the highest sacrifice) are all Parameśvara.

## **CHAPTER VIII – AKṢARA-BBAHMA YOGA.**

(The Yoga of the Imperishable Brahman)

[8.1 – 4](#). The definitions of the terms 'brahma', 'adhyātma', 'adhi-bhūta', 'adhi-daiva', 'adhi-yajña' and 'adhi-deha', in reply to the question of Arjuna; all of these contain the same Īśvara.

[8.5 – 8](#). Release by thinking of the Blessed Lord at the moment of death; but, that which is always in the mind, is also in the mind at the moment of death; therefore, the advice to always think of the Blessed Lord'; and, to fight.

[8.9 – 13](#). The concentrated, meditation on the Om-kāra, that is, on the Parameśvara at, the moment of death; and the result of it.

8.14 – 16. The annihilation of re-birth as a result of constant thinking of the Blessed Lord, the states of Brahma-loka etc., are not permanent.

8.17 – 19. The

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day and night of Brahmadeva, the creation of the Cosmos from the Imperceptible in the beginning of his day, and the merging of it, in that same Imperceptible, in the beginning of his night.

8.20 – 33. The Imperceptible (avyakta) and Imperishable (akṣara) Spirit (puruṣa) is even beyond that Imperceptible; the possibility of attaining the Ultimate Imperceptible, by means of Devotion; and, the end of re-birth as a result of such attainment.

8.23 – 26. The paths of Devayāna and Pitṛyāna; the first puts an end to re-birth, the second is just the opposite.

8.27 – 28. The result which is obtained by the Yogin who understands the principle underlying these two paths is the highest, and therefore, the advice to act accordingly.

## **CHAPTER IX – RĀJAVIDYA-RĀJAGUHYA YOGA.**

(The Yoga of the 'King of Cults' and the 'King of Mysticism'),

9.1 – 3. The Path of Devotion, which, includes Spiritual Knowledge (jñāna) and Worldly Knowledge (vijñāna),: is productive, of Release and is nevertheless easy and realisable; therefore, it is the King of Paths (rāja-mārga).

9.4 – 6. The unintelligible Yogic activity of the Parameśvara; being in the entire creation, He is nevertheless, not in it; and the entire creation being in Him, is yet not in Him.

9.7 – 10. He makes use of the illusory Prakṛti for the construction and destruction of the Cosmos, and the creation and destruction of created beings (bhūta); and in spite of all this, He is untouched by Desire, that is to say, Unattached (alīpta).

9.11, 12. Those who do not realise this, and defy the Parameśvara, Who has taken a human form, are fools, and āsuri (ungodly).

9.13 – 15. On the other hand, those who go in for. various other devotional practices by means of the Jñāna-yajña are daivi (godly).

9.16 – 19. The Īśvara is All-pervading, and He is the parent, the owner, and the maintainer of the universe, and the doer of whatever is good or bad.

9.20 – 22. Although the paraphernalia of Yajñas and Yāgas according to the Śrutis may be productive of heaven, yet, that fruit is non-permanent; if it is said that the same is necessary for 'Yoga-kṣema' (maintenance and protection), then, that can be obtained' even by Devotion.

[9.23 – 25](#). Devotion to other deities is indirectly Devotion to the Parameśvara, but the fruit is consistent with the deity and the mental belief.

[9.26](#). If

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there is Devotion, the Parameśvara is satisfied even by the offering of a petal of a flower.

[9.27, 28](#). The advice to dedicate all acts to the Īśvara; escape from the bonds of Karma, and Release by doing so.

[9.29 – 33](#). The Parameśvara is equal to all; whether one is a, sinner, or born in a low caste, or a woman, a Vaiśya, or a Śūdra, all attain the same end, if they become unlimited Devotees.

[9.34](#). The advice to Arjuna to adopt this path.

## **CHAPTER X – VIBHŪTI-YOGA.**

(The Yoga of Manifestations)

[10.1 – 3](#). The destruction of sin by realising that the unborn Parameśvara is prior to the gods and the Ṛṣis.

[10.4 – 6](#). Manifestations of the Īśvara, and Yoga; the origin of Reason (buddhi), and other qualities (bhāva), the origin of the



seven Ṛṣis and of Manu, and of everything in order of succession from the Īśvara.

[10.7 – 11](#). The Acquisition of Knowledge by the Devotees of the Blessed Lord, who have Realised this; but to these too, 'buddhi-siddhi' (the success of buddhi) is given by the Blessed Lord.

[10.12 – 18](#). The request of Arjuna to the Blessed Lord to describe to him, His manifestations and Yoga.

[10.19 – 40](#). A description of the most important out of the innumerable manifestations of the Blessed Lord.

[10.41, 42](#). All that which is 'vibhūtimat' (manifested), 'śrī-mat' (illustrious) and 'urjita' (elevated) is the effulgence of the Parameśvara, but only in part.

## **CHAPTER XI – VIŚVA-RŪPA-DARŚANA YOGA.**

(The Yoga of the Showing of the Cosmic Form)

[11.1 – 4](#). The request of Arjuna to the Blessed Lord to show to him His Īśvaric form, as described in the previous chapter.

[11.5 – 8](#). The giving to Arjuna of transcendental vision to enable him to see this wonderful and transcendental form.

[11.9 – 14](#). The description of the Cosmic Form (viśva-rūpa) by Sañjaya.

[11.15 – 31](#). The praise of the Cosmic Form by Arjuna, who had become humble as a result of surprise and terror; and, his

request to the Cosmic Form-ed Lord to become propitious and explain who He was.

[11.32 – 34](#). The reply that: "I am 'Time' or 'Death' (kāla)"; and the encouraging advice to Arjuna to become the instrument for killing those warriors, who had already become engulfed in

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that 'Time' or 'Death'. The praise, the beseeching for forgiveness, and the request to resume the former form made by Arjuna to the Cosmic Form-ed Lord.

[11.47 – 51](#). Impossibility of visualising the Cosmic Form otherwise than by exclusive worship; resuming by the Blessed, Lord of His former form.

[11.52 – 54](#). A vision of the Cosmic Form impossible even to gods in the absence of Devotion.

[11.55](#). Therefore, the final advice, in the form of a general summary, to Arjuna to perform Action after becoming 'niḥsaṅga' (unattached) and 'nirvaira' (non-inimical), with the intention of dedicating everything to the Parameśvara.

## **CHAPTER XII – BHAKTI-YOGA.**

(The Yoga of Devotion)

[12.1.](#) The question of Arjuna, with reference to the summarising advice given at the end of the last chapter, as to whether the 'worship of the Perceptible' (vyaktopāsanā), or, the 'worship, of the Imperceptible' (avyaktopāsanā) was superior.

[12.2 – 8.](#) The end of both is the same; but, the worship of the Imperceptible is arduous, whereas, the worship' of the Perceptible is easy and speedily successful; the advice, therefore, to worship the Perceptible with a desireless frame of mind.

[12.9 – 12.](#) The various devices, such as, Practice (abhyāsa), Knowledge (jñāna), Meditation (dhyāna) etc., for concentrating one's attention on the Blessed Lord; and the best path, in any case, is the 'Abandonment of the Fruit. of Action' (karma-phala-tyāga).

[12.13 – 19.](#) A description of the mental condition of the Devotee and the love of the Blessed Lord for him.

[12.20.](#) Those believing. Devotees, who live according to this religion, are most; beloved of the Blessed Lord.

### **CHAPTER XIII – KṢETRA-KṢETRAJÑA-VIBHĀGA YOGA.**

(The Yoga of the Division of the Cosmos into the Body and the Ātman)

[13.1,2.](#) Definitions of the terms 'kṣetra' and 'kṣetrājña'; acquaintance with them, means acquaintance with the Parameśvara.

[13.3, 4.](#) The consideration of the Body (kṣetra) and, the Atman (kṣetrājña) according to the Upaniṣads, and according. to 'the Brahma-Sūtras.

[13.5, 6.](#) The nature of the form of the Body.

[13.7 – 11.](#) The nature of the form of Knowledge (jñāna);

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opposite of it, that is, Ignorance (ajñāna).

[13.12 – 17.](#) The nature of the form of the Knowable (jñeya).

18. The result of Realising all this.

[13.19 – 21.](#) The consideration of Matter (prakṛti) and Spirit (puruṣa). Prakṛti is the active agent, and Puruṣa is inactive, but is the one who derives the benefit, sees, etc.

[13.22, 23.](#) The Puruṣa is the Paramātmā within the Body; the end of re-birth as a result of the Realisation of this Prakṛti and Puruṣa.

[13.24, 25.](#) The ways of acquiring the Knowledge of the Ātman, namely, meditation (dhyāna), the Sāṃkhya-Yoga, the Karma-Yoga, and Devotion by hearing sermons with a believing frame of mind.

[13.26 – 28.](#) The birth of the moveable and immoveable creation from the union between the Body and the Ātman; that which is imperishable in it, is the Parameśvara; reaching the Parameśvara by one's own efforts.

[13.29, 30.](#) Prakṛti is the active agent, the Ātman is inactive; all created things are contained in One, and they all spring from One; attainment of the Brahman by Realising this,

[13.31 – 33.](#) The Ātman is eternal and qualityless, that is to say, though it enlightens the Body, it is unattached (nirlepa).

[13.34](#) The highest Perfection as a result of Realising this difference between the Body and the Ātman.

#### **CHAPTER XIV – GUNATRAYA-VIBHĀGA YOGA.**

(The Yoga of the division of Matter into three constituents.)

[14.1, 2.](#) A consideration of the diversity of created beings included in Spiritual Knowledge and Worldly Knowledge, having regard to the different constituents; this too is productive of Release.

[14.3, 4.](#) The Parameśvara is the father of all created beings; and, Prakṛti, which is dependent on the Parameśvara, is their mother.

[14.5 – 9.](#) The influence of the sattva, rajas, and tamas constituents on the created universe

[14.10 – 13.](#) Impossibility of there being only one constituent; the growth of the third constituent by the defeat of the other two; and, the nature of the growth of each.

[14.14 – 18.](#) The result of Action, according to the predominance of any particular constituent, and the state which is obtained after death.

[14.19 – 20.](#) The attainment of Release by going beyond the three constituents.

[14.21 – 25.](#) A description of the nature and the mode of living of the Triguṇātīta (one who has gone beyond the three constituents)

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given in answer to the question of Arjuna.

[14.26, 27.](#) The acquiring-of the Triguṇātīta state by solitudinal (ekāntika) Devotion, and. the attainment thereafter of the Parameśvara, Who is the ultimate resolution of all Release, all religion, and all happiness.

## **CHAPTER XV – PURUṢOTTAMA-YOGA.**

(The Yoga of the most Excellent Spirit).

[15.1, 2.](#) The similarity between the Vedic and the Sāṃkhya descriptions of the Cosmic Tree (brahma-vṛkṣa) in the form of the 'aśvattha' (pippala) tree.

[15.3 – 6.](#) The cutting of that tree by 'asaṅga' (unattachment) is the only way for the attainment of the Immutable State (avyaya-pada), which is beyond it; a description of this Immutable State.

[15.7 – 11.](#) The forms of the 'jīva' and the 'liṅga-śarīra' (Subtle Body), and their mutual, relationship, which can be realised by scientists.

[15.12 – 15.](#) The all-pervasiveness of the Parameśvara.

[15.16 – 18.](#) The nature of the kṣara (perishable) and the akṣara (imperishable); the Puruṣottama is beyond both.

[15.19, 20.](#) By the Realisation of this mystic Puruṣottama, one acquires All-Knowledge (sarvajñātā) and Accomplishment (kṛtakṛtyatā).

## **CHAPTER XVI – DAIVSURA-SAMPAT-VIBHĀGA YOGA.**

(The Yoga of the division into godly and ungodly endowment).

[16.1 – 3.](#) The 26 qualities of godly (daivi) endowment.

[16.4.](#) The nature of ungodly (āsurī) endowment.

[16.5.](#) Godly endowment is productive of Release, and ungodly endowment is productive of bondage.

[16.6 – 20](#). A detailed description of the ungodly; they are destined to perdition, birth after birth.

[16.21, 22](#). The three-folded door of Hell – Desire (kāma), Anger (krodha), and Avarice (lobha) – bliss, as a result of giving these up.

[16.23, 24](#). The advice to. Arjuna to decide about the Doable and the Not-Doable consistently with the Śāstras, and to act accordingly.

## **CHAPTER XVII – ŚRADDHĀ-TRAYA-VIBHĀGA YOGA.**

(The Yoga of the Division into three kinds of Faith)

[17.1 – 4](#). A description of three kinds of Faith, such as, the sāttvika etc., according to the inherent nature of Prakṛti, in reply to the question of Arjuna; as the Faith, so the man.

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[17.5, 6](#). The āsura is different from this.

[17.7 – 10](#). The sāttvika, rājasa, and tāmasa kinds of food.

[17.11 – 13](#). The three kinds of Yajña.

[17.14 – 16](#). The three divisions of Austerity (tapa) namely, śarīra (bodily), vācika (vocal) and manasā (mental).



[17.17 – 19](#). Each of these is again of three kinds, by a division according as it is sātṭvika etc.

[17.20 – 22](#). The three kinds of gifts, namely, sātṭvika etc.

[17.23](#). The 'brahma-nirdeśa' (symbol of the Brahman) 'OM-TAT-SAT'

[17.24 – 27](#). Out of these, the word OM is indicative of the beginning of Action, the word TAT refers to Desireless Action, and the word SAT refers to Proper Action.

[17.28](#). That -which remains, namely, the Unreal (asat), is fruitless, whether in this life or in the next.

## **CHAPTER XVIII – MOKṢA-SAMNYĀSA YOGA.**

(The Yoga of Release by Renunciation).

[18.1, 2](#). The definitions of Samnyāsa (Renunciation) and Tyāga (Abandonment) according to the doctrine of Karma-Yoga in reply to the question of Arjuna.

[18.3 – 6](#). The explanation about the eligibility and non-eligibility of Action; even actions (or ritual) like Yajñas and Yāgas must be performed, with a Desireless frame of mind, just like other Actions.

[18.7 – 9](#). The sātṭvika, rājasa, and tāmasa varieties of Abandonment of Action; out of these, performing one's duty, abandoning the Hope of Fruit (phalāśā) is the only sātṭvika-tyāga (equable Abandonment).

18.10, 11. The one who abandons-the Fruit of Action is the 'sāttvika-tyāgin'; because, no. one escapes mere Action.

18.12. The three-fold Fruit of Action does not become a source of bondage to the 'sāttvika tyāgin'.

18.13 – 15. There are five reasons for any Action taking place; man is not the only reason.

18.16, 17. Therefore, when a man has got rid of the egotistical feeling (ahamkāra-buddhi) that 'I am the doer', he remains unattached, though he performs Action.

18.18 – 19. The three-fold nature of, and the Sāṃkhya form of 'karma-codanā' (the inspiration to perform Action), and 'karma-saṃgraha' (the performance of Action).

18.20 – 22. The three kinds of Jñāna according to the three qualities sāttvika etc.; the Realisation that 'avibhaktaṃ vibhakteṣu' is sāttvika.

18.23 – 25. The three kinds of Karma (Action); of these, that in which the Hope for Fruit is absent is sāttvika.

18.26 – 28. The three

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kinds of Doers (kartā); the Unattached (niḥsaṅga) Doer is sāttvika.

18.29 – 32. The three kinds of Reason (buddhi).

18.33 – 35. The three kinds of Perseverance (dhṛti).

[18.36 – 39](#). The three kinds of Happiness; that which arises out of Self-Identification is sāttvika.

[18.40](#). The three divisions of the entire universe according to different constituents.

[18.41 – 44](#). The justification of the four castes on the basis of the three different constituents; the inherent Actions of Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras.

[18.45, 46](#). Ultimate Perfection by doing one's own duties, as prescribed for the four castes.

[18.47 – 49](#). Living according to another's religion is fraught with danger; Action according to one's own religion, though faulty, ought not to be abandoned; and when all Actions are done according to one's own religion (dharma), with a desireless frame of mind, one attains the 'naiṣkarmya-siddhi' (The Perfection of Desireless Action).

[18.50 – 56](#). An explanation of how this Perfection (siddhi) is obtained, even after performing all Actions.

[18.57, 58](#). The advice to Arjuna to follow this Path.

[18.59 – 63](#). Individuation (ahamkāra) is helpless before the inherent nature of Prakṛti; one must surrender oneself to the Īśvara; the advice to Arjuna that he should realise this mystic secret, and then do whatever he wants.

[18.64 – 66](#). The final promise of the Blessed Lord that if Arjuna surrendered himself to Him, giving up all other Paths of Religion, He would redeem him from all sins.

[18.67 – 69.](#) The benefit to be derived by maintaining the tradition of the Path of Karma-Yoga.

[18.70, 71.](#) A description of the results thereof.

[18.72, 73.](#) Arjuna becomes ready to fight, after the clearing of his doubts as to what he ought to do.

[18.74 – 78.](#) The summing up by Sañjaya after he had told this story to Dhṛtarāṣṭra .

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# CHAPTER I – ARJUNA-VIṢĀDA YOGA.

प्रथमोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER I.

[In the present Mahābhārata, the tradition as to how the Gītā preached to Arjuna by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the beginning of the Bhārati war, was subsequently promulgated, has been described as follows: In the beginning of the war, Vyāsa went to Dhṛtarāṣṭra and said to him, "If you desire to see the war, I will give you your eye-sight". [1] But, Dhṛtarāṣṭra said that he did not wish to see the destruction of his own clan (kula). Thereupon, Vyāsa gave to a bard (sūta) named Sañjaya such spiritual eye-sight as would enable him to actually see everything that was taking place on the battle-field, while sitting where he as, and made arrangements that he should relate to Dhṛtarāṣṭra what was happening in the war, and then went away. (Ma. Bhā. Bhīṣma. 2). When, according to this arrangement, Sañjaya first went to give to Dhṛtarāṣṭra the news of the fall of Bhīṣma in the war, Dhṛtarāṣṭra lamented the death of Bhīṣma and commanded Sañjaya to relate to him the entire history of the war. Sañjaya

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[1] Dhṛtarāṣṭra was totally blind, having lost both his eyes. ~Translator.

has first described the armies on both sides, and then started to recite the Gītā in answer to the question of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. The same history was later on related by Vyāsa to his disciples, and thereafter, by Vaisampayana, one of those disciples, to Janamejaya, and finally by Sauti to Śaunaka; and the Gītā is comprised in all the printed editions of the Mahābhārata, from the 25th to the 42nd chapters of the Bhīṣmaparva. According to this tradition –]

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच

धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे समवेता युयुत्सवः ।

मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत संजय ॥ 1.1 ॥

Dhṛtarāṣṭra said:–

(1.1) O Sañjaya, what did my sons

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and the sons of Pāṇḍu, desirous of war, do, when they assembled together, on the sacred field, the Kurukṣetra?

[The Kurukṣetra is an open space of ground surrounding the city of Hastināpura. The present city of Delhi stands on this field. Kuru, the common ancestor of the Kauravas and the Pāṇḍavas, was ploughing this field laboriously by his own hands. That is why it is called 'kṣetra' (or, field). It is said in the Bhārata, that, when Indra thereafter gave to Kuru the blessing that all those who would die on that field in war or while

performing religious austerities, would obtain Heaven, Kuru stopped ploughing the field. (Ma. Bhā. Śālya. 53). As a result of this blessing, this field came to be called 'dharmakṣetra' or 'sacred ground'. There is also a story that Paraśurāma killed all the Kṣatriyas on twenty-one successive occasions on this field, and in that way offered a pious oblation to the manes of his deceased ancestors (made a pitṛ-tarpaṇa); and there have been big wars, even in modern times, on this field.]

सञ्जय उवाच

§§ दृष्ट्वा तु पाण्डवानीकं व्यूढं दुर्योधनस्तदा ।

आचार्यमुपसंगम्य राजा वचनमब्रवीत् ॥ 1.2 ॥

पश्यैतां पाण्डुपुत्राणामाचार्य महतीं चमूम् ।

व्यूढां द्रुपदपुत्रेण तव शिष्येण धीमता ॥ 1.3 ॥

Sañjaya said:—

(1.2) Thereupon, seeing that the army of the Pāṇḍavas was (standing) drawn up in battle-array, the prince Duryodhana went to the Preceptor (Droṇa), and said —

[It is stated in the chapters of the Mahābhārata before the Gītā that when Bhīṣma had first arranged the array of the Kaurava army, the Pāṇḍavas, in accordance with the rules of war, arranged their army in an array (vyūha) called the 'Vajra'. (Ma. Bhā. Bhī. 19.4 – 7; Manu. 7. 191). During the course of the war, these military arrays used to be changed every day.]

(1.3) O Ācārya! behold this mighty host of the sons of Pāṇḍu, of which the array has been arranged by your

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talented pupil, the son of Drupada (Dhṛṣṭadyumna).

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासा भीमार्जुनसमा युधि ।

युयुधानो विराटश्च द्रुपदश्च महारथः ॥ 1.4 ॥

धृष्टकेतुश्चेकितानः काशिराजश्च वीर्यवान् ।

पुरुजित्कुन्तिभोजश्च शैब्यश्च नरपुङ्गवः ॥ 1.5 ॥

युधामन्युश्च विक्रान्त उत्तमौजाश्च वीर्यवान् ।

सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्व एव महारथाः ॥ 1.6 ॥

(1.4) In it there are heroes, mighty bowmen, the equals of Bhīma and Arjuna in battle, (namely) Yuyudhāna (Sātyaki) Virāṭa, and the mahārathī Drupada,

(1.5) and Dhṛṣṭaketu, Cekitāna, and the valiant king of Kāśi, Purujit Kuntibhoja, and that eminent man named Śaibya,

(1.6) as also the heroic Yudhāmanyu, and the valiant Uttamaujā, and the son of Subhadrā (Abhimanyu), and the (five) sons of Draupadi all of whom are holders of great chariots.

[That warrior who could fight single-handed with ten thousand archers was known as 'mahārathī', that is, 'holder of a great



chariot'. A description has been given in the 8 chapters (164th to 171st) of the Udyogaparva, stating which warrior in both the armies was a 'rathī', or a 'mahārathī', or an 'atirathī'. There it is stated that Dhṛṣṭaketu was the son of Śísupāla; similarly, Purujit Kuntibhoja are not the names of two persons. It is stated there that Purujit was the legitimate son of the king Kuntibhoja, to whom Kunti had been given in adoption; that, Kuntibhoja was his family-name; and that, he was the maternal uncle of Dharma, Bhīma, and Arjuna (Ma. Bhā. U. 171.2). Yudhāmanyu and Uttamaújā were both from the Pāncāla country, and Cekitanā was a Yādava. Yudhāmanyu and Uttamaújā were the protectors of the wheels of Arjuna's chariot. Śaibya was the king of the Śibi country.]

अस्माकं तु विशिष्टा ये तान्निबोध द्विजोत्तम ।

नायका मम सैन्यस्य संज्ञार्थं तान्ब्रवीमि ते ॥ 1.7 ॥

(1.7) O best of the twice-born! I shall now mention to you the names of the most distinguished on our side,

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who are the leaders of my army, for your information; learn, who they are.

भवान्भीष्मश्च कर्णश्च कृपश्च समितिंजयः ।

अश्वत्थामा विकर्णश्च सौमदत्तिस्तथैव च ॥ 1.8 ॥

अन्ये च बहवः शूरा मदर्थे त्यक्तजीविताः ।

नानाशस्त्रप्रहरणाः सर्वे युद्धविशारदाः ॥ 1.9 ॥

अपर्याप्तं तदस्माकं बलं भीष्माभिरक्षितम् ।

पर्याप्तं त्विदमेतेषां बलं भीमाभिरक्षितम् ॥ 1.10 ॥

(1.8) They are yourself and Bhīṣma, and Karṇa, and Kṛpa, the victorious in battle, Aśvatthāmā, and Vikarṇa (one of the hundred brothers of Duryodhana), as also the son of Somadatta (Bhūriśavā);

(1.9) and there are besides several other valiant men, who are ready to sacrifice their lives for me, and all of them can fight with various weapons, and are proficient in the art of war.

(1.10) This our army, which is protected by Bhīṣma is aparyāpta, [1] (that is, unlimited or boundless), whereas that their army, protected by Bhima, is paryāpta, (that is, parimita, or limited).

[There is a difference of opinion as to how the words 'paryāpta' and 'aparyāpta' are to be understood, 'paryāpta' ordinarily means 'sufficient'. Therefore, some interpret this stanza as meaning, " the army of the Pāṇḍavas is sufficient, and our army is insufficient (aparyāpta) ". But, this interpretation is not correct. In the foregoing chapters of the

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[1] Dr. Annie Besant translates 'aparyāpta' as 'insufficient' (See The Bhagavadgītā translated by Annie Besant and Bhagvandas. Theo. Pub. House, 1926 p.5). But Telang translates it as 'unlimited' (See. S. B. B. Series Vol. VIII p.88). ~Translator.

Udyogaparva, Duryodhana, while describing their army to Dhṛtarāṣṭra has given the names of the above-mentioned commanders of his army, and has said:— "As my army is very large and well-trained, I am bound to win the war " (U. 54.60 – 70); similarly, when Duryodhana again describes his army to Droṇācārya, further on in the Bhīṣmaparva, he has uttered the words of the above stanzas

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of the Gītā (Bhīṣma. 51.4 – 6); and as this description has been given in a joyful frame of mind, in order to encourage the whole army, the word 'aparyāpta', cannot possibly be interpreted otherwise than as meaning 'unlimited', 'boundless', or 'innumerable'. The root meaning of the word 'paryāpta' is 'that which is capable of being surrounded, (āpa = to occupy), on all sides (pari)'. But, when the word 'paryāpta', is used after some word in the fourth (dative) case, as in 'for a particular purpose, paryāpta', or 'to some person (or thing), paryāpta', then the word 'paryāpta', means 'that which is sufficient for, or capable of performing that particular purpose'; and if there is no word before the word 'paryāpta', it, by itself, means 'sufficient', 'limited', or 'countable'. For instance, take the words 'grāsūn ṭākanyā sārakhem' (that which is capable of overwhelming) in the Marathi language, which are synonymous with the Sanskrit, word 'paryāpta'. "When you say 'amakyālā grāsūn ṭākanyā sārakhem', (that

which is capable of overwhelming some thing or someone), it means that it is 'sufficient for him or it', and remains over; but, if you simply say 'grāsūn ṭākanyā sārakhem', it means that 'someone else can overwhelm it'. In the present stanza, as there is no word before the word 'paryāpta', this latter meaning is the correct meaning; and the Brahmānandagiri commentary gives illustrations of the word being used in that sense in books other than the Bhārata. The explanation given by 'some, that Duryodhana, getting frightened, says that his army is 'aparyāpta', that is, 'insufficient', is not correct; because, there is no description anywhere of Duryodhana having got frightened; on the other hand, it is stated that the Pāṇḍavas arranged their army in the military array known as Vajravṛkṣa, because the army of Duryodhana was large; and that, Yudhiṣṭhira was dejected at seeing the huge army of the Kauravas (Ma. Bhā. Bhīṣma. 19.5 and 21). The reason for saying that the Pāṇḍava army was 'protected by Bhīma', although, Dhr̥ṣṭadyumna was the generalissimo, is that Bhīma had been posted in the front of the Vajravṛkṣa, in which the Pāṇḍavas had arranged their army on the first day of the war, for protecting it;

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and because he was the only person whom Duryodhana could see in the forefront as the protector of the army. {Ma. Bhā. Bhīṣma. 19. 4 – 11, 33 and 34}; and that is why these two

armies have been respectively described as 'bhīmanetra' (of which, Bhīma is the eye) and 'bhīṣmanetra' (of which, Bhīṣma is the eye) in the chapters of the Mahābhārata prior to the Gītā (Ma. Bhā. Bhīṣma. 20.1).]

अयनेषु च सर्वेषु यथाभागमवस्थिताः ।

भीष्ममेवाभिरक्षन्तु भवन्तः सर्व एव हि ॥ 1.11 ॥

(1.11) (And therefore) Do you all respectively stand in all the various 'ayanas', (that is, 'openings in the army'), as you have been directed to do, and do you all protect Bhīṣma on all sides.

[Duryodhana has elsewhere (Ma. Bhā. Bhī. 15.1 – 20; 99.40, 41) given his reasons for directing that Bhīṣma, who was himself a powerful warrior, and who could not be defeated by anybody, should be protected on all sides, by saying that it was necessary for all to be careful, because Bhīṣma had resolved not to fight with Śikhaṇḍi, and was liable to be killed by him.

arakṣyamāṇaṁ hi vṛko hanyāt simhaṁ mahābalaṁ ।

mā simhaṁ jāmbukeneva ghātayethāḥ śikhaṇḍinā ॥

that is, " If the extremely powerful Lion is not protected, even a wolf will kill him; therefore, do not allow the Lion to be destroyed by a fox like Śikhaṇḍi". Bhīṣma was capable of dealing single-handed with any person whosoever except Śikhaṇḍi; and, he did not look for help from anybody else.]

§§ तस्य संजनयन्हर्षं कुरुवृद्धः पितामहः ।

सिंहनादं विनद्योच्चैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् ॥ 1.12 ॥

(1.12) (At this moment), The oldest of the Kauravas, the (powerful) grand-sire (the generalissimo Bhīṣma) roared aloud like a lion in order to enladden him (Duryodhana), and blew his conch (as a sign of readiness for battle).

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ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः ।

सहसैवाभ्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् ॥ 1.13 ॥

ततः श्वेतैर्हयैर्युक्ते महति स्यन्दने स्थितौ ।

माधवः पाण्डवश्चैव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्रदध्मतुः ॥ 1.14 ॥

पाञ्चजन्यं हृषीकेशो देवदत्तं धनञ्जयः ।

पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्खं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः ॥ 1.15 ॥

अनन्तविजयं राजा कुन्तीपुत्रो युधिष्ठिरः ।

नकुलः सहदेवश्च सुघोषमणिपुष्पकौ ॥ 1.16 ॥

काश्यश्च परमेष्वासः शिखण्डी च महारथः ।

धृष्टद्युम्नो विराटश्च सात्यकिश्चापराजितः ॥ 1.17 ॥

द्रुपदो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्वशः पृथिवीपते ।

सौभद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खान्दध्मुः पृथक्पृथक् ॥ 1.18 ॥

(1.13) Thereupon, conches, kettle-drums, tabors, drums, cowhorns, these (martial musical instruments) suddenly blared

forth; and that sound was tumultuous, (that is to say, saturating all the four sides).

(1.14) Thereupon, Mādhava (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), and the son of Pāṇḍu (Arjuna), who were seated in a large chariot, to which pure white horses were yoked, also blew their divine conches (in order to say by way of reply that their side was also ready).

(1.15) Hṛṣīkeśa, (that is, Śrī Kṛṣṇa), (blew) the (conch called) Pāñcajanya; Arjuna (blew) the Devadatta; Vṛkodara, the doer of terrible deeds (that is, Bhīmasena) blew the mighty conch named Pauṇḍra;

(1.16) king Yudhiṣṭhira, the son of Kunti, blew the Anantavijaya; and Nakula and Sahadeva blew the Sughoṣa and the Maṇipuṣpaka.

(1.17) Similarly, Kāśirāja, holder of an excellent bow, Śikhaṇḍi, the mighty car-warrior, and Dhṛṣṭadyumna, Virāṭa, and Sātyaki, the unconquered,

(1.18) Drupada, and the (five) sons of Draupadi, and the mighty-armed Saubhadra (Abhimanyu), all these, O King (Dhṛtarāṣṭra)! blew severally their respective conches on all sides.

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स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् ।

नभश्च पृथिवी चैव तुमुलो व्यनुनादयन् ॥ 1.19 ॥

(1.19) That tumultuous din, which shook the earth and the firmament, rent the hearts of Kauravas.

§§ अथ व्यवस्थितान्दृष्ट्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान्कपिध्वजः ।  
प्रवृत्ते शस्त्रसंपाते धनुरुद्यम्य पाण्डवः ॥ 1.20 ॥  
हृषीकेशं तदा वाक्यमिदमाह महीपते ।

अर्जुन उवाच

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत ॥ 1.21 ॥  
यावदेतान्निरिक्षेऽहं योद्धुकामानवस्थितान् ।  
कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन् रणसमुद्यमे ॥ 1.22 ॥  
योत्स्यमानानवेक्षेऽहं य एतेऽत्र समागताः ।  
धार्तराष्ट्रस्य दुर्बुद्धेर्युद्धे प्रियचिकीर्षवः ॥ 1.23 ॥

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्तो हृषीकेशो गुडाकेशेन भारत ।  
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम् ॥ 1.24 ॥

(1.20) Then, seeing that the Kauravas were properly arrayed, and when the attack by weapons was about to start, the Pāṇḍava, on whose standard is depicted Māruti, (that is to say, Arjuna), took up his bow, and spoke thus,

(1.21) O king Dhṛtarāṣṭra, to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, –Arjuna said;–(Please) station my chariot between the two armies,



(1.22) so that I will, in the meantime, observe these people-who stand here desirous to engage in battle; and I shall also see those persons with whom I have to fight in this war, and

(1.23) gaze on those fighters who have collected here with the intention of helping the cause of the evil-minded Duryodhana.

Saṅjaya said:—

(1.24) O Dhṛtarāṣṭra! when Guḍākeśa, (that is, the conqueror of idleness, namely, Arjuna), had spoken thus to Him, Hṛṣīkeśa, (that is, the Conqueror of the 'organs, namely, Śrī Kṛṣṇa), drove and

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placed the splendid chariot (of Arjuna) between the two armies; and —

[The meanings given by me above to the two words 'hṛṣīkeśa' and 'guḍākeśa' are consistent with the interpretations of the commentators. In the Nārada-Pañcarātra, the etymology of 'Hṛṣīkeśa' has been given as: 'hṛṣīka' means 'the organs', and their 'īsa', that is, 'the Lord', is the 'hṛṣīkeśa'. (Nā. Pañca. 5.8.17). And it is stated in Kshiraśvami's commentary on the Amarakośa that the word 'hṛṣīka', that is, 'the organs', is derived from the root 'hṛṣ' —'to give pleasure'; and that the organs are called 'hṛṣīka', because they give pleasure to the human being. Nevertheless, there is a doubt whether the meanings of the words 'hṛṣīkeśa' and 'guḍākeśa' given above

are correct; because, the word 'hṛṣīka' as meaning 'the organs', and the word 'guḍākā', as meaning 'idleness' or 'sleep' are not in common use; and the words 'hṛṣīkeśa' and 'guḍākeśa' can be etymologically derived, in another way. Instead of breaking up the word 'hṛṣīkeśa' into 'hṛṣīka' + 'īsa', and the word 'guḍākeśa' into 'guḍākā' + 'īsa', they can respectively be broken up as, hṛṣī + keśa, and, guḍā + keśa; and then 'hṛṣīkeśa' will mean "one whose hair (keśa) are standing up 'as a result of joy' (hṛṣī) ", and are flowing, that is to say, Śrī Kṛṣṇa; and 'guḍākeśa' will mean, "one whose hair (keśa) are guḍā or gūḍhā, that is, closely growing or matted",. that is to say, Arjuna. Nīlakaṇṭha, who has written a commentary on the Bhārata, has suggested this alternative meaning of the word 'guḍākeśa' in his commentary on Gītā 10.20; and having regard to the name Romaharṣaṇa, of the father of Sūta, this second interpretation of the word 'hṛṣīkeśa' can also not be said to be improbable. Nay, in the Nārāyaṇopākhyāna in the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata, in giving the etymological meanings of the principal names of Viṣṇu, 'hṛṣī' has been interpreted as meaning 'joy-giving' and 'keśa' has been interpreted as meaning 'rays'; and the word 'hṛṣīkeśa' has been interpreted as meaning "One who fills the world with joy by means, of the rays of His incarnations, the Sun and the Moon"; and

it is stated that He is on that account called 'hṛṣīkeśa' (Śān. 345.47 and 342 64, 65; Udyo. 69.9). And it is similarly stated in the previous stanzas that the word 'keśava' is derived from 'keśa' i.e., 'rays' (Śān. 341.47). Whichever of these meanings is taken, it is impossible to give a fully satisfactory reason as to why Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna got these names. But this is not the fault of the etymologists. When it comes to defining proper names which have become very common, these kinds of difficulties or differences of opinion are quite likely to arise.]

भीष्मद्रोणप्रमुखतः सर्वेषां च महीक्षिताम् ।

उवाच पार्थ पश्यैतान्समवेतान्कुरुनिति ॥ 1.25 ॥

तत्रापश्यत्स्थितान्पार्थः पितृन्पुत्रान्पितामहान् ।

आचार्यान्मातुलान्भ्रातृन्पुत्रान्पौत्रान्सखींस्तथा ॥ 1.26 ॥

श्वशुरान्सुहृदश्चैव सेनयोरुभयोरपि ।

तान्समीक्ष्य स कौन्तेयः सर्वान्वन्धून्वस्थितान् ॥ 1.27 ॥

(1.25) HE said, in the presence of Bhīṣma and Droṇa, and all other kings: "O Arjuna! look at these Kauravas assembled (here)".

(1.26) Then Arjuna noticed that all who were assembled there, were (his own) elders, ancestors, preceptors, maternal-uncles, brothers, sons, grand-sons, and friends,

(1.27) and fathers-in-law, and dear ones in both the armies; (and, in this way) when he had seen that all who had assembled there were his kinsmen, Arjuna, the son of Kunti,

कृपया परयाविष्टो विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत् ।

अर्जुन उवाच

§§ दृष्ट्वेमं स्वजनं कृष्ण युयुत्सुं समुपस्थितम् ॥ 1.28 ॥

सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति ।

वेपथुश्च शरीरे मे रोमहर्षश्च जायते ॥ 1.29 ॥

गाण्डीवं संसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते ।

न च शक्नोम्यवस्थातुं भ्रमतीव च मे मनः ॥ 1.30 ॥

निमित्तानि च पश्यामि विपरीतानि केशव ।

न च श्रेयोऽनुपश्यामि हत्वा स्वजनमाहवे ॥ 1.31 ॥

न काङ्क्षे विजयं कृष्ण न च राज्यं सुखानि च ।

किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा ॥ 1.32 ॥

येषामर्थे काङ्क्षितं नो राज्यं भोगाः सुखानि च ।

त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणांस्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च ॥ 1.33 ॥

आचार्याः पितरः पुत्रास्तथैव च पितामहाः ।

मातुलाः श्वशुराः पौत्राः श्यालाः संबन्धिनस्तथा ॥ 1.34 ॥

एतान्न हन्तुमिच्छामि घ्नतोऽपि मधुसूदन ।

अपि त्रैलोक्यराज्यस्य हेतोः किं नु महीकृते ॥ 1.35 ॥

निहत्य धार्तराष्ट्रान्नः का प्रीतिः स्याज्जनार्दन ।

पापमेवाश्रयेदस्मान्हृत्त्वैतानाततायिनः ॥ 1.36 ॥

(1.28) being filled with intense pity and despair, began to say as follows:

Arjuna said;

"O Kṛṣṇa! seeing these my kinsmen, assembled (here) desirous of engaging in battle,

(1.29) my limbs droop down, my mouth is parched up, my body

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shivers, and my hairs stand on end,

(1.30) the Gāṇḍiva (bow) slips from my hand, and the whole of my body is hot; I cannot also stand, and my mind is awlirl;

(1.31) similarly, O Keśava! all omens appear adverse (to me), and I do not perceive (that) any good will come from killing my own kinsmen in war.

(1.32) O Kṛṣṇa! I have no desire for victory, nor for sovereignty, nor for pleasures. O Govinda! of what use is having sovereignty or enjoyment or life itself to us?

(1.33) (Even) those for whose sake we desire kingdom, or enjoyments and pleasures, are standing here for battle, having given up (the hope of) life or wealth;

(1.34) though preceptors, fathers, sons, as well as grand-fathers, maternal-uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law, as also relatives

(1.35) have all uprisen to kill (us), yet, I do not wish to kill (them), Madhusūdana, even for obtaining the kingdom of the three worlds; then, why (talk) of the earth?

(1.36) Janārdana! what pleasure may be ours by killing these Kauravas? Although they are felons, yet, by killing them, sin will but attach (itself) to us.

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[agnido garadaś caiva śāstrapāṇir dhanāpahaḥ ।

kṣetradārāharaś caiva śad ete ātatāyinaḥ ॥

(Vāsiṣṭha-Smr. 3.16),

that is, "he who has come to burn one's house, he who administers poison, he who comes to kill with a weapon in his hand, he who robs one of one's money, or of one's wife, or of one's field, these six are 'felons' (ātatāyinaḥ)". Even Manu has said that such felons should be killed without any qualm of conscience, and that there is no sin in doing so (Manu. 8.350, 351).]

तस्मान्नार्हा वयं हन्तुं धार्तराष्ट्रान्स्वबान्धवान् ।

स्वजनं हि कथं हत्वा सुखिनः स्याम माधव ॥ 1.37 ॥

(1.37) Therefore, it is not proper that we ourselves should kill the Kauravas, who are our kinsmen; for how, O Mādhava! can we become happy by killing our own kinsmen?

§§ यद्यप्येते न पश्यन्ति लोभोपहतचेतसः ।

कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम् ॥ 1.38 ॥

कथं न ज्ञेयमस्माभिः पापादस्मान्निवर्तितुम् ।

कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्विजनादन ॥ 1.39 ॥

(1.38) Although these, whose minds have been over-powered by greed, do not see the guilt resulting from the extinction of a family, and the sin of treachery towards a friend,

(1.39) yet, O Janārdana! when we clearly see the guilt of the extinction of a family, how can it not enter our minds to turn away from this sin?

[See my disquisition in the first, and again in the fourteenth chapters of the Gītā-Rahasya, on the questions: (i) what is the import of the fact that Arjuna became doubtful , regarding his own duty to fight, when he saw in advance with his own eyes that the war would entail the killing of elders, the death of relatives, and the extinction of families; (ii) what is the relation between, that fact and the subsequent argument in the Gītā, and (iii) what is the importance of the first chapter of the Gītā from this point of view, etc. To what extent the argument that, those' who are wise should follow the doctrine: "na pāpe pratipāpaḥ syāt" (i.e., 'Do not commit a sin in retaliation of

another's sin' ~Translator.), and should remain inactive, but should not become wicked for punishing the evil-minded, though the latter might not realise their own wickedness as a result of their minds having been overpowered by avarice, and the other common arguments mentioned in this place, are applicable or should be made applicable to the present circumstances, is a question as important as the ones mentioned above; and I have explained in the Chapter XII of the Gītā-Rahasya at pages 544 to 554 what, in my opinion, is the answer of the Gītā to these questions. If one bears in mind the fact that the exposition to be found in the subsequent chapters of the Gītā has been made in order to solve the doubt which had arisen in the mind of Arjuna as shown in the first chapter, one can no more have any doubt about the import of the Gītā. These doubts arose in the mind of Arjuna, because the Bhārātī war was a civil war, due to a split between persons belonging to the same kingdom and the same religion, who had come forward to kill each other. Whenever similar circumstances have arisen in modern history, similar doubts have also arisen. Arjuna now clearly specifies the evils which flow from the extinction of a family.]

कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।

धर्मे नष्टे कुलं कृत्स्नमधर्मोऽभिभवत्युत ॥ 1.40 ॥

अधर्माभिभवात्कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः ।

स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु बाष्पेय जायते वर्णसंकरः ॥ 1.41 ॥



संकरो नरकायैव कुलघनानां कुलस्य च ।

पतन्ति पितरो ह्येषां लुप्तपिण्डोदकक्रियाः ॥ 1.42 ॥

(1.40) On the extinction of a family; the eternal rites of families are destroyed; and when these rites (of the family) have perished, lawlessness predominates over the whole family.

(1.41) When lawlessness prevails, O Kṛṣṇa, the women of the family become corrupt; and when they have become corrupt, then, O Vārṣṇeya! ('descendant of Vṛṣṇi'~Translator.), there follows caste-confusion.

(1.42) And when there is caste-confusion,

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it (necessarily) leads the destroyer of the family and the (entire) family to hell; and as a result of the cessation of the ritual of offering rice-balls and water, their ancestors also fall down (to hell ~Translator.).

दोषैरेतैः कुलघनानां वर्णसंकरकारकैः ।

उत्साद्यन्ते जातिधर्माः कुलधर्माश्च शाश्वताः ॥ 1.43 ॥

उत्सन्नकुलधर्माणां मनुष्याणां जनार्दन ।

नरकेऽनियतं वासो भवतीत्यनुशुश्रुम ॥ 1.44 ॥

(1.43) By these sins of the destroyers of families, which result in caste-confusion, the eternal caste-rites and family-rites are abolished;

(1.44) and O Janārdana! we have heard that persons whose family rites are abolished, must necessarily undergo residence in hell.

§§ अहो बत महत्पापं कर्तुं व्यवसिता वयम् ।

यद्राज्यसुखलोभेन हन्तुं स्वजनमुद्यताः ॥ 1.45 ॥

यदि मामप्रतीकारमशस्त्रं शस्त्रपाणयः ।

धार्तराष्ट्रा रणे हन्युस्तन्मे क्षेमतरं भवेत् ॥ 1.46 ॥

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वार्जुनः संख्ये रथोपस्थ उपाविशत् ।

विसृज्य सशरं चापं शोकसंविग्नमानसः ॥ 1.47 ॥

(1.45) Alas! we are engaged in committing a heinous sin in that we have uprisen to kill our own kinsmen out of greed of the pleasures of sovereignty.

(1.46) If, rather than this, (these) Kauravas, bearing arms slay me in the battle, I having become unarmed and having given up retaliation in return, that would be happier for me. Sañjaya said:—

(1.47) Having spoken thus on the battle-field, Arjuna, whose mind was agitated by grief, casting aside the bow and arrows (in his hands), sat down (quiet) on his seat in the chariot.

[As it was customary to fight standing in the chariot, the words "sat down on his seat in the chariot" more clearly bring out the idea that he had no desire to fight, as a result of his dejection. It would appear from the descriptions of

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chariots given in some places in the Mahābhārata that in the times of the Mahābhārata these chariots were ordinarily two-wheeled, and that larger chariots were sometimes drawn by four horses, and that both the master of the chariot (the rathī) and the charioteer (sārathī) used to sit in the anterior part of the chariot, side by side. In order that it should be possible to find out whose the chariot was, they used to erect a particular ensign (dhvaja) on the chariot. It is a well-known tradition that Maruti himself used to sit on the ensign of Arjuna.]

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु उपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे अर्जुनविषादयोगो नाम प्रथमोऽध्यायः ॥ १ ॥

Thus ends the first chapter entitled The DEJECTION OF ARJUNA in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman that is on the Karma-Yoga, in the Upaniṣad sung, (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord. [I have interpreted these concluding lines as showing that the Gītā does not deal only with the Science of the Brahman (brahma-vidyā), but contains an exposition of the Karma-Yoga

consistently with the Science of the Brahman. See Chap. I (page 4), Chap. III (page 82) and Chap. XI (page 489) of the Gītā-Rahasya. Although these concluding lines-are not to be found in the Mahābhārata, yet, they must have come into existence before the date of the commentaries in. support of Renunciation (saṁnyāsa); because, no scholar, who is a follower of the doctrine of Renunciation, will give the concluding lines as above. This clearly shows that the Gītā does not support the doctrine of Renunciation, but contains an exposition of Karma-Yoga, as a science, in the form of a conversation. I have shown the difference between the scientific method and the catechismal method in the beginning of Chap. XIV of the Gītā-Rahasya.]

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# CHAPTER II – SĀM̐KHYA YOGA.

द्वितीयोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER II.

सञ्जय उवाच

तं तथा कृपयाविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् ।  
विषीदन्तमिदं वाक्यमुवाच मधुसूदनः ॥ 2.1 ॥

श्रीभगवानुवाच

कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् ।  
अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरमर्जुन ॥ 2.2 ॥  
क्लैब्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते ।  
क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप ॥ 2.3 ॥

Sañjaya said:—

(2.1) To him, (Arjuna, who was), thus filled with pity, and whose eyes were filled with tears and turbid, and who was dejected, Madhusūdana (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) spoke these words:

The Blessed Lord said:—

(2.2) O: Arjuna! how has this infamous conduct (kaśmalam) not practised (at any time) by, the Āryas, (that is, by good

men), 'which leads to hell, and which-brings one into disrepute, entered your mind, in this time of peril?

(2.3) O Pārtha! be not effeminate (like this): this is not worthy of you. O, (thou) harasser of foes, casting off this base weakness of heart, stand up (to fight).

[It is true that I have in this place given the literal meaning of the word 'parantapa' as 'harasser of foes'. But I do not consider logical, the theory of most of the commentators, that these oft-recurring adjectival epithets, or names of Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, have been used in the Gītā in a hidden meaning, or with a particular intention. In my opinion, these names have been used as was convenient for prosody, and do not convey any intentional meaning; and, therefore, I have on many occasions not reproduced in the translation, the name used in the stanza, but have generally translated them as 'Arjuna' or 'Śrī Kṛṣṇa'.]

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अर्जुन उवाच

॥ कथं भीष्ममहं संख्ये द्रोणं च मधुसूदन ।

इषुभिः प्रति योत्स्यामि पूजार्हावरिसूदन ॥ 2.4 ॥

गुरूनहत्वा हि महानुभावान् श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके ।

हत्वार्थकामांस्तु गुरुनिहैव भुञ्जीय भोगान् रुधिरप्रदिग्धान् ॥

2.5 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(2.4) O Madhusūdana I how shall I counter-attack in battle with arrows, Bhīṣma and Droṇa, who, O Destroyer of enemies, are entitled to (high) reverence?

(2.5) It is meritorious to live in this world even by begging, without killing one's reverend elders; for by killing such elders, (though they might be) abashed by monetary considerations [1] I shall have to enjoy in this world blood-tainted enjoyments.

[The plural word 'gurūn' must be taken here as meaning 'elders' and not as 'preceptors'; for there was no preceptor in the army other than Droṇācārya, who taught the martial arts. When, before the commencement of the war, Yudhiṣṭhira took off his shield on the battle-field, and went in all humility, to such 'elders', that is, to Bhīṣma, Droṇa, and Śalya in order to place his head on their feet, and to beseech their blessings, they gave due praise to him, who had followed the course of conduct laid down by propriety, and they all explained to him their reason for fighting on the side of Duryodhana as follows:—

arthasya puruṣo dāso dāsastv artho no kasyacit ।

iti satyaṁ mahārāja baddho 'smy arthena kauravaiḥ ॥

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[1] Dr. Besant & Bhagvandas translate 'arthakāmān' as 'well-wishers' (see footnote on p.24, The Bhagavadgītā, 1926) ~Translator.

that is, "Man is the slave of wealth, wealth is the slave of nobody; this being the true state of things, O Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, the Kauravas have tied me by the bonds of wealth" (Ma. Bhā. Bhī. 43. 35, 50 and 76). The words 'abashed by monetary considerations ' used above signify the meaning conveyed in this stanza.]

न चैतद्विद्मः कतरन्नो गरीयो यद्वा जयेम यदि वा नो जयेयुः ।  
यानेव हत्वा न जिजीविषाम-स्तेऽवस्थिताः प्रमुखे धार्तराष्ट्राः ॥

2.6 ॥

(2.6) Nor do we know which of the two is more meritorious

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for us, whether we should vanquish, or that we should be vanquished (by them). To live by killing whom, we have no desire, those very Kauravas are standing here in front, (to fight).

[This stanza refers to a test of the respective merits of Action or Inaction, which is similar to the theory of 'the greatest good of the greatest number'; and its net import is that it is impossible to decide by that test whose victory is better (See Gītā-Rahasya, p.115 and 116).

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसम्मूढचेताः ।



यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां  
प्रपन्नम् ॥ 2.7 ॥

न हि प्रपश्यामि ममापनुद्याद् यच्छोकमुच्छ्रोषणमिन्द्रियाणाम् ।  
अवाप्य भूमावसपत्नमृद्धं राज्यं सुराणामपि चाधिपत्यम् ॥ 2.8 ॥

सञ्जय उवाच

एवमुक्त्वा हृषीकेशं गुडाकेशः परन्तप ।

न योत्स्य इति गोविन्दमुक्त्वा तूष्णीं बभूव ह ॥ 2.9 ॥

तमुवाच हृषीकेशः प्रहसन्निव भारत ।

सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तमिदं वचः ॥ 2.10 ॥

(2.7) As, on account of my natural temperament having been destroyed by adverse circumstances, my mind is in doubt as to (my) 'dharma' (that is, my duty), I am asking You. Tell me that which is assuredly meritorious. I am your disciple, instruct me, who have surrendered myself to You.

(2.8) For, though I might win a prosperous kingdom on the earth free from foes, or even the sovereignty of the gods, (of heaven), yet, I do not see aught (any means) which will remove this my grief, which is drying up my organs. Sañjaya said:—

(2.9) After Guḍākeśa, the harasser of enemies,. (that is, Arjuna), had spoken thus to Hṛṣīkeśa (Śrī Kṛṣṇa), he became quiet after saying to Govinda: "I shall not fight".

(2.10) (Thereafter) O Bhārata (Dhṛtarāṣṭra)!, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, smiling as it were, spoke thus to Arjuna, who was sitting dejected between the two armies.

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[The Blessed Lord is now going to give advice on the question of one's duty in this world, to Arjuna, who was pulled on one side by the inherent duty of the Kṣatriyas, and on the other side by the fear of the sin of killing one's elders, and causing the extinction of families; and who was engulfed in the doubt whether he should 'kill or be killed', and was prepared to give up the fight and live the life of a mendicant. Arjuna's objection was that his Ātman would not be benefited by a terrible act like war. Therefore, the advice in the Gītā starts by showing how those great men, who have attained the fullest bliss of their Ātmans by Realising the Parabrahman, live in this world. The Blessed Lord says that if one scrutinises the affairs of the world, one sees that from times immemorial there are two ways in which persons, who have acquired the Knowledge of the Brahman, have been leading their lives. (See Gītā, 3.3; and Gītā-Rahasya, Chap. XI). After acquiring the Knowledge of the Self, men like Śuka gave up worldly life and led the lives of mendicants, whereas, other men like Janaka, who had also acquired the Knowledge of the Self, spent their time in numerous worldly activities according to their own dharma, even after the Acquisition of Knowledge, for the universal

good. The first mode of life is known as the 'Sāṁkhya', or the Sāṁkhya-niṣṭhā, and the other is known as 'Karma-Yoga' or 'Yoga' (cf. stanza 39). But the Gītā has laid down the doctrine that though both these modes of life were in vogue, the Karma-Yoga was the superior mode, as will be shown later on (Gī. 5.2). Out of these two Niṣṭhās, the mind of Arjuna was inclined towards the Saṁnyāsa (Renunciation) -Niṣṭhā. Therefore, the Blessed Lord has first brought home to him his mistake, on the basis of the philosophy relating to that path of life; and then, from the 39th stanza onwards, He has started the exposition of Karma-Yoga. Though the followers of the Sāṁkhya path do not take part in Action after the Acquisition of Knowledge, yet, there is no difference between the Knowledge of the Brahman according to the Sāṁkhya path and according to Karma-Yoga. Therefore, the Blessed Lord has first explained to Arjuna in a

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ridiculing way that, if the Ātman is indestructible and permanent, even according to the Sāṁkhya system, then his question, "How shall I kill so and so" was mere worthless talk.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

॥ अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।

गतासूनगतासूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥ 2.11 ॥

न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः ।

न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम् ॥ 2.12 ॥

The Blessed Lord-said:—

(2.11) You are lamenting for those, for whom you should not lament, and yet talk about Knowledge! Knowers do not lament (whether) the dead or the not-dead.

[In this stanza it is stated that one should not lament whether life continues or has become extinct. Out of these, lamenting over one who is dead, is only natural; and it is proper to give advice not to do so. But a doubt having arisen as to why and in what manner it is possible to lament the fact of someone not being dead, commentators have indulged in a considerable amount of discussion on: this point; and many have said that it is a matter of lamentation that the lives of fools and ignorant people should be spared. But, instead-of hairsplitting in this way, we should interpret the word 'lament' in a broad way, as meaning 'to feel happy or unhappy', or 'to mind'. All that is intended here is, that the Jñānin looks upon both these matters as one and the same.]

(2.12) Just realise that not only is it not that I was not (in the past), but it is not that you and these kings were not <in the past>; nor is it that all of us will not be again in the future.

[In commenting on this stanza, it is stated in the Rāmānujabhāṣya that, if. both 'I', that is, the Supreme Being, and 'you and these kings', that is, the other Ātmans, existed in

the past and will be born again in the future, then, according to this stanza, the Supreme Being, and the

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Ātman both become separate, independent, and permanent entities. But, this argument is not correct. It is a partisan argument in support of a particular doctrine; because, this stanza is intended to explain only that both are permanent; and their mutual inter-relation is not stated here, nor was there any occasion for doing so. When that occasion arose later on, we find stated in clear terms in the Gītā itself, the Non-Dualistic (advaita) doctrine that the Parameśvara, that is, the Blessed Lord, is the embodied Ātman in the bodies of all created beings (Gī. 8.4; 13.31).]

देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा ।

तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति ॥ 2.13 ॥

(2.13) Just as, for the One Which assumes a corporeal form, there is (acquired) infancy, youth, and old age, in this Body, so also, is another Body (later on) acquired; (therefore) those who have acquired Knowledge, do not suffer from any ignorance in this matter.

[The great ignorance or fear in the mind of Arjuna was "How shall I kill a particular person?" Therefore, in order to dispel that ignorance, the Blessed Lord first philosophically examines

the questions 'what is death', and 'what is killing' (Stanzas 11 to 30). Man is not merely something encased in a body, but an aggregate of the Body and the Ātman. Out of these, the Ātman, which becomes perceptible as T, as a result of Individuation (ahamkāra), is permanent and immortal. It is to-day, it was yesterday, and it will also be to-morrow. Therefore, the words 'to kill' or 'to die' cannot be properly applied to the Ātman, and there is no room for lamentation in that matter. Then remains the Body. That, of course, is admittedly non-permanent and destructible, and will come to an end, if not to-day or to-morrow, at least after a 100 years. Cf. "adya vā 'bdaśatānte vā mṛtrur vai prāṇināṁ dhruvaḥ" (that is, "Death is certain for living beings, whether to day, or after a hundred years" ~Translator.), (Bhāg. 10.1.38); and as the Ātman definitely acquires later on another body in accordance with the previous Action (karma), though it gets out of one body, it is also not proper to lament over the loss of that body. In short,

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it is definitely proved, that whether one looks at the matter from the point of view of the Body or of the Ātman, lamentation on account of death is foolish. But, though this fact is thus proved, yet, it is necessary to explain why one should not lament, on account of the suffering which one goes through while the existing life is being destroyed. Therefore,

the Blessed Lord now deals with the form of this bodily happiness and unhappiness, and shows that it is not proper to lament on account of that suffering.]

§§ मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः ।

आगमापायिनोऽनित्यास्तांस्तितिक्षस्व भारत ॥ 2.14 ॥

यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ ।

समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते ॥ 2.15 ॥

(2.14) O Son of Kunti! these contacts (with bodily organs) of 'mātrā', (that is, of things in the external world), which produce cold and heat, or happiness and unhappiness, come into existence and die out; (therefore) they are non-permanent (that is, destructible). O Bhārata! do you bear these (without lamentation);

(2.15) because, O, pre-eminent among men! it is the Jñānin alone, (who is) equal towards happiness and unhappiness, who (on that account) is not affected by them, that becomes capable of attaining immortality, (that is to say, the state of the Immortal Brahman).

[The man who has not Realised that the Name-d and Form-ed Cosmos is illusory, by Realising the identity of the Brahman and the Ātman, looks upon as real, the happiness and unhappiness or the cold and heat arising from the contact of the physical organs with the external world, and wrongly attributes those properties to the Ātman; and, on that account, suffers grief. But the man who has realised that all

the emotions are of the Prakṛti, and that the Ātman (Self) is a Non-doer and Unattached, looks upon happiness and unhappiness as alike; and the Blessed Lord is now telling Arjuna, that he (Arjuna) should bear unhappiness and happiness with such an equable frame of Mind; and the same, import has been explained in a more

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exhaustive manner in the subsequent chapters. The word 'mātrā' has been interpreted in the Śāṅkarabhāṣya as meaning 'the organs, by which external things can be measured or known', Cf., 'mīyate ebhiriti mātrā'. But, some commentators interpret 'mātrā' as meaning 'the external objects, such as, sound, touch, etc., which can be measured by means of the physical organs'; and they interpret 'mātrāsparśa' as meaning 'the contact of those external objects with the physical organs'; and that is the interpretation which has been accepted by me; because, where the ideas appearing in this stanza, appear again later on in the Gītā (Gī. 5.21, 23), the word 'bāhya-sparśa' has been used; and if the word 'mātrāsparśa' is interpreted in the way in which I have interpreted it, both these words become consistent with each other. But, though these two words can be made consistent with each other in this way, the word 'mātrāsparśa' seems to be the more ancient of the two; because, the word 'mātrā-saṅga' has been used in the Manu-Smṛiti in the same sense



(6.57); and it is stated in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad, that the Ātman of a Jñānin becomes 'asaṁsarga' (Cf. mātrā 'saṁsargaḥ'), that is, detached from the Matras, that is to say, that he becomes free; and there is no connotation (saṁjñā) for him after his death (Br. Mādhyan. 4.5.4; Ve. Sū. Śām. Bhā. 1.4.22). The words 'heat and cold', or, 'happiness and unhappiness' are synecdochial, and include the opposite couples (dvaṁdva) of 'love and hostility', 'real and unreal', 'death and immortality' etc. As these opposite couples belong to the Māyā-world and the true Parabrahman is, as described in the Nāsadiya-Sūkta, beyond this duality, one cannot attain the Brahman, otherwise than by peacefully bearing these opposite couples and releasing the Reason from the grip of these couples (Gī.2.45; 7.28 and Gi Ra. Ch. IX p.314 and 351). The same meaning is now made clear from the point of view of the Philosophy of the Absolute Self –].

§§ नासतो विद्यते भावो नाभावो विद्यते सतः ।

उभयोरपि दृष्टोऽन्तस्त्वनयोस्तत्त्वदर्शिभिः ॥ 2.16 ॥

(2.16) That which is not (asat), cannot be as if it is; and

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that which is (sat), cannot be as if it is not; in this way, the seers of the Essence of things have perceived the truth about 'is'

and 'is not' (sat and asat), (that is to say, they have defined their connotation, after having perceived the truth).

[The word 'anta' in this stanza has the same meaning as in the compounds 'rāddhānta', 'siddhānta', or 'kṛtānta', (Gī. 18,13); and the Śāsvatakośa defines the various meanings of the word 'anta' as "svarūpaprāntayor antam antike 'pi prayujyate" (Śā. 381) (that is," the border of a form (body), or of a region, as also Death ~Translator.) According to this stanza 'sat' means the 'Brahman', and, 'asat' means the Name-d and Form-ed visible world (See Gī. Ra. Ch. IX, p.307 and pp.335 to 339). Although the doctrine "that which is, cannot cease to be", looks like the Satkāryavāda theory, (See Gītā-Rahasya Ch. VII, p.310 and Ch. IX. pp.325 and 335 ~Translator.), one must bear in mind that its meaning is slightly different. Where one thing is produced out of another thing, e. g., the tree from the seed, the only principle which can be applied is that of the Satkāryavāda. That is not the idea to be conveyed in the present stanza; and, all that is being said is that, the existence (astitva or bhāva) of 'sat', that is, of 'that which exists', and the 'non-existence' (abhāva) of 'asat', that is, of 'that which does not exist', are both permanent, that is, ever-lasting. When we thus look upon the respective existence and non-existence of these two as permanent, it follows as a matter of course that 'asat' is not the result of the destruction of that which was 'sat'. But this doctrine is not the same as the Satkāryavāda doctrine, which initially takes for granted the coming into existence of one thing from another thing, as an effect from a

cause (Gī. Ra. Ch. VII, p.211). The Mādhva-bhāṣya reads the words "vidyate bhāvaḥ" out of "nāsato vidyate bhāvaḥ", which is the first quarter of this stanza, as 'vidyate + abhāvaḥ'; and it has interpreted these words as meaning that "there is no 'abhāva' that is, 'destruction' of the asat' (unreal), that is, 'avyakta' (imperceptible) Prakṛti;

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and, as it has been stated in the second quarter of the stanza that the 'sat' too is not destroyed, Madhvācārya has, according to his Dualistic doctrine, interpreted the entire stanza as meaning that both the 'asat' and the 'sat' are permanent. But, this meaning is not the straight-forward meaning of the stanza. It is a stretched meaning; for, it can be seen that the two mutually opposite words 'abhāva' and 'bhāva' have been used in this place in the same way as the mutually opposite words, 'asat' and 'sat'; and if the word 'abhāva' has been used in the second line of the stanza, namely, in the phrase, "nābhāvo vidyate sataḥ", it is quite clear that the word intended to be used in the first line of the stanza must have been 'bhāva' and not 'abhāva'; besides, it was not necessary at all to use the words 'abhāva' and 'vidyate' twice, in order to say that both 'asat' and 'sat' are permanent. But, even if this repetition is looked upon as a respectful repetition, as suggested by Madhvācārya, it has been clearly stated later on in the 18th stanza, that the human body to be seen in the perceptible or

visible world is destructible, that is to say, non-permanent. It, therefore, clearly follows that according to the Bhagavadgītā, the Body cannot be looked upon as permanent, in the same way as the Ātman. Whereas the latter is permanent, the former is non-permanent. Nevertheless, I have given here the meaning of this stanza according to Madhvācārya, by way of example, in order to show my readers how the meanings of words are stretched by doctrine-supporting commentators with the-intention of supporting their own doctrine. However, as that which is 'sat' can never cease to exist, it is no use lamenting over the sat-formed (satsvarūpa) Ātman; and as the Name-d and Form-ed Body etc., as also the emotions of pleasure or displeasure, are essentially destructible from the philosophical point of view, it is also not proper to lament their loss. This justifies the words "you are lamenting that over which you should not lament" used in speaking to Arjuna. The Blessed Lord now further explains the meanings of the words 'sat' and 'asat', in the next stanzas –]

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अविनाशि तु तद्विद्धि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।

विनाशमव्ययस्यास्य न कश्चित्कर्तुमर्हति ॥ 2.17 ॥

अन्तवन्त इमे देहा नित्यस्योक्ताः शरीरिणः ।

अनाशिनोऽप्रमेयस्य तस्माद्युध्यस्व भारत ॥ 2.18 ॥

य एनं वेत्ति हन्तारं यश्चैनं मन्यते हतम् ।

उभौ तौ न विजानीतो नायं हन्ति न हन्यते ॥ 2.19 ॥

(2.17) Know that That (fundamental Ātman-formed Brahman) Which has pervaded or occupied this whole (world) is indestructible. The destruction of this Inexhaustible (Principle), none can bring about.

[This is the description of what has been referred to as 'sat' in the last stanza. Now, the Blessed Lord says, that the Ātman, which is the Owner of the Body, falls into this category of the Permanent, and He goes on to explain what is to be called 'Non-permanent' or 'asat' –]

(2.18) These bodies acquired by the eternal, indestructible, and unimaginable Owner of the Body (Ātman) are said to be perishable, (that is non-eternal). Therefore, fight! O Bhārata!

[In short, if one thus discriminates between what is eternal and what non-eternal, the idea that 'I am killing a particular person' is proved to be false; and the reason given by Arjuna for not fighting falls to the ground. This conclusion is now made more clear –]

(2.19) He who thinks that It (the Owner of the Body or the Ātman) is the killer, or, who thinks that It is slain, both these do not possess true Knowledge; (because) this (Ātman) does not kill, and is not killed.

[Because, the Ātman is permanent and itself a Non-Doer, and the whole activity is of Prakṛti. This and the next stanza appear

in the Kāthopaniṣad (Kāṭha. 2.18, 19). It is also stated in several places in the Mahābhārata that everything is swallowed up by 'kāla' (Time, or Death); and that 'kills' or 'is killed' are worldly names for this pastime of Death (Śān. 25.15). The Blessed Lord has again explained to Arjuna later on (11.33) this very

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principle in terms of the Philosophy of Devotion when He says that He himself has already killed Bhīṣma, Droṇa, and the others in His form of Death, and that Arjuna should now become only the nominal implement (nimitta).]

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचि. न्नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।  
अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥

2.20 ॥

वेदाविनाशिनं नित्यं य एनमजमव्ययम् ।

कथं स पुरुषः पार्थ कं घातयति हन्ति कम् ॥ 2.21 ॥

वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।

तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णान्यन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥

2.22 ॥

(2.20) This (Ātman) is never born nor does It ever die; nor is it that It, having (once) existed, will not be again; It is unborn,

ever-lasting, immutable, and primeval; and it is not killed, though the Body is killed.

(2.21) O Pārtha! that man who has Realised that It is indestructible, ever-lasting, unborn, and inexhaustible, how and whom can he cause to be killed, and how and whom can he kill?

(2.22) Just as a man, casting off old clothes puts on others and new ones, so the dehi, (that is to say, the Ātman, which owns the Body), casting off old bodies, becomes united with others and new bodies.

[This simile of clothes is in ordinary use. In another place in the Mahābhārata, the illustration has been given of leaving one house (śāla), and going to another house (Śān. 15.56); and one American writer has expressed the same idea by giving the illustration of putting on a new cover on a book. The same argument is here applied to the Body, which was applied above in the 13th stanza to the states of infancy, youth, and old age.]

नैनं छिन्दन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः ।

न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुतः ॥ 2.23 ॥

(2.23) Weapons do not cut It (that is, the Ātman); fire does not burn It; so also does water not moisten It: the wind

does not dry It up.

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च ।

नित्यः सर्वगतः स्थाणुरचलोऽयं सनातनः ॥ 2.24 ॥

अव्यक्तोऽयमचिन्त्योऽयमविकार्योऽयमुच्यते ।

तस्मादेवं विदित्वैनं नानुशोचितुमर्हसि ॥ 2.25 ॥

(2.24) This (Ātman), which is unleaveable, uncombustible, not-to-be-moistened, and not-to-be-dried up, is permanent, all-pervading, stable, immovable, and, eternal (that is, everlasting).

(2.25) This (Ātman) is said to be imperceptible (that is, not perceptible by the organs), unthinkable (that is, impossible of being understood even by the Mind), and immutable (that is, such as is not subject to the attribute of any modification). Therefore, knowing this (Ātman) to be such, it is not proper that you should grieve over It.

[This description has been taken from the Upaniṣads, and is of the qualityless Ātman, and not of a qualityful Ātman; because, the adjectives 'avikārya' (immutable), or 'acintya' (unthinkable) cannot be applied to the Qualityful. This reason for not grieving has been given on the authority of that description. Now, someone may advance the argument that, as he does not accept the Ātman as eternal, this argument is not acceptable to him. Therefore, the Blessed Lord first mentions this assumptive proposition (pūrva-pakṣa) and replies to it as follows –]



§§ अथ चैनं नित्यजातं नित्यं वा मन्यसे मृतम् ।

तथापि त्वं महाबाहो नैवं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ 2.26 ॥

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च ।

तस्मादपरिहार्येऽर्थे न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ 2.27 ॥

(2.26) Or, even if you believe that this Ātman, (is not permanent, but with the Body) is constantly born, and constantly dies, even then, O Mahābāho! (mighty-armed ~Translator.), it is not proper that you should grieve over It;

(2.27) because, to one that is born, death is certain, and to one that dies, birth is certain; therefore, about an (this)

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unavoidable (according to your abovementioned opinion) matter, you ought not to grieve.

[The argument, mentioned in the two above stanzas 26 and 27, is not for supporting the doctrine of the Gītā. It must be remembered that this is a reply to the assumptive proposition, raised by the words 'atha ca' = 'or'. The only thing to be shown is: whether one looks upon the Ātman as permanent, or as non-permanent, there is no room for lamentation in either case. I have already mentioned above that the doctrine advanced by the Gītā is, that the Ātman is existent (sat), un-born, immutable, and un-imaginable, or qualityless. The Blessed Lord now gives another argument, on the basis of the

Sāṃkhya system, in support of the theory that there should be no lamentation over the Body, as it is non-permanent –].

§§ अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।

अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥ 2.28 ॥

(2.28) All created beings are imperceptible in the beginning, perceptible in the middle, and imperceptible again in death; (if this is the case with every being) then, O Bhārata! where is (there room for) lamentation?

[The word 'avyakta' means 'that which is not perceivable by the organs'; the argument advanced in this stanza, is based on the Sāṃkhya doctrine that the entire perceptible universe has come out of One original imperceptible Substance by gradual degrees, and that in the end, that is, at the time of the final Dissolution (pralaya), the entire perceptible universe is again dissolved into the same Imperceptible (GL 8. 18). See the explanation of this Sāṃkhya doctrine in the seventh and the eighth chapters of the Gītā-Rahasya. If the perceptible form of anything soever is, in this way, going to be destroyed sometime or other, there remains no cause at all for lamenting over some-thing, which, by its very nature, is liable to destruction. This same stanza appears in the Strīparva of the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Strī. 2.6), where the word 'abhāva' (non-existent) has been used instead of 'avyakta'. Also, later on, the word 'adarśana', i.e., 'to go out of sight', has been

used with reference to death in the stanza: "adarśanād āpatitaḥ punaś cādarśanaṁ gatāḥ | na te tava na teṣāṁ tvam tatra kā paridevanā || " (Strī. 2.13), (that is, "emerged from the Invisible, and returning into the (same) Invisible, these are not thine, nor art thou theirs; wherefore, then (any) lamentation (for them)?" ~Translator.). If lamentation is futile both according to the Sāṁkhya and the Vedānta philosophies, and if the same conclusion is reached, even looking upon the Ātman as non-permanent, why do people lament over death? The reply is: this is due to ignorance of the nature of the Ātman, because –]

§§ आश्चर्यवत्पश्यति कश्चिदेन-माश्चर्यवद्ब्रूदति तथैव  
चान्यः ।

आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न चैव  
कश्चित् ॥ 2.29 ॥

देही नित्यमवध्योऽयं देहे सर्वस्य भारत ।

तस्मात्सर्वाणि भूतानि न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥ 2.30 ॥

(2.29) Some look at this (Ātman~Translator.) as a wonder (wonderful thing), others speak of It as a wonder, and some others (than them) hear (of It ~Translator.) as a wonder; but even after (seeing and describing in this way, and) hearing no one (out of these) Knows It (really).

[Though learned people enter into discussions about the Ātman, as a wonder, yet, as very few persons ever realise the true nature of It, many people lament over death. Do not you do likewise, but Realise the true nature of the Ātman after mature deliberation, and cease to lament; that is what this stanza means. The Ātman has been described in the same way in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad (Kaṭha. 3.7).]

(2.30) The Owner of the Body, (that is, the Ātman), (which is) in every Body, is always unkillable, (that is, never liable to destruction); therefore, O Bhārata (Arjuna)! it is not proper that you should lament about all (i.e., any) created things.

[It has thus far been proved that there is no reason to lament if someone kills or is killed, because according to Sāṃkhya philosophy, or the philosophy of the Path of Renunciation, the Ātman is immortal, and the Body

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is inherently mortal, But if, on that account, someone draws the conclusion that there is no 'sin' in somebody killing someone else, that will be a very serious mistake. Only the meaning of the words 'dying' and 'killing' has been analysed here, and this explanation has been given only for the purpose of first removing the fear attendant on death or on killing. Man is a combination of the Body and the Ātman. As the Ātman, out of these, is immortal, the words 'dying' or 'killing' do not

apply to it. Then remains the Body; but as the Body is naturally mortal, there is no reason for lamentation if it is destroyed. But, even accepting the position that one should not lament over death, or become happy or unhappy if someone dies or is killed accidentally or in course of time, one does not thereby solve the question, why a person, should enter upon such a terrible act as war and destroy the bodies of others. Because, although the Body is mortal, yet, as the Body is the only means by which one can attain the permanent benefit of the Ātman or obtain. Release, both suicide and the unjustified killing of another person are looked upon as grave sins by religion. Therefore, though it is not proper to lament over death, yet, it is necessary to give some other satisfactory reason why one person should kill another. This is known as the discrimination between 'dharma' (Right) and 'adharma' (Wrong); and this is the subject-matter really propounded in the Gītā. The Blessed Lord, therefore, first tells Arjuna that as fighting is the duty of all Kṣatriyas according to the arrangement of four castes accepted even in the Sāṃkhya philosophy, not only should he not lament over the fact of death or of killing, but that both dying or being killed in war were things which were his lot according to the religion of Kṣatriyas—]

§§ स्वधर्ममपि चावेक्ष्य न विकम्पितुमर्हसि ।

धर्म्याद्धि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत्क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ॥ 2.31 ॥

(2.31) Besides, even if you consider your own duty, you ought not to falter (on this occasion); because, there is

nothing more meritorious to a Kṣatriya than warfare enjoined by duty.

[This argument about "one's own duty" (svadharma) appears twice later on (Gī. 3.35 and 18.47). This and the subsequent stanza say, that although the fourth stage (āśrama) in the shape of Renunciation of Action (karma-saṁnyāsa), is the last step according to the Path of Renunciation or the Sāṁkhya philosophy, yet, as it had been enjoined by Manu and other writers of the Smṛtis that before reaching that stage, Brahmins had to follow the duties of Brahmins, and Kṣatriyas, the duties of Kṣatriyas, and in that way to complete the state of a householder (gṛhasthāśrama), it was the duty of Arjuna, who was in the state of a householder, to fight.]

यदृच्छया चोपपन्नं स्वर्गद्वारमपावृतम् ।

सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदृशम् ॥ 2.32 ॥

अथ चेत्त्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि ।

ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥ 2.33 ॥

अकीर्तिं चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम् ।

सम्भावितस्य चाकीर्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यते ॥ 2.34 ॥

(2.32) And O Pārtha! this war, which is indeed a door of Heaven, found open without effort, falls to the lot of only those Kṣatriyas, who are fortunate.

(2.33) But, if you will not carry on this (for you) righteous warfare, then you will have abandoned your duty and lost your honour, and incurred sin;

(2.34) (not only that, but) also (all) men will tell of your everlasting infamy! And to one who has been honoured, infamy is (a) greater (death) than death.

[This same principle has been explained by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Yudhiṣṭhira in the Udyogaparva (Ma. Bhā. U. 72. 24). The stanza there is as follows: "kulīnasya ca yā nindā vadho vā 'mitrakaṛṣaṇa | mahāguṇo vadho rājan na tu nindā kujīvikā' (that is, 'ill-fame of a well born (person) is (his) murder; it is not only an ill-fame which spoils life, but indeed the highest form of murder' ~Translator.). But, as this idea has been conveyed in the Gītā in a shorter form, and

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also as the Gītā is more in vogue, the line, "saṁbhāvitasya" etc., from, the Gītā gets easily fixed in the memory, and people use it as a proverb. Many other stanzas from the Gītā are similarly to be heard quoted everywhere. The Blessed Lord now explains what the form of the infamy is, on the present occasion –]

भयाद्रणादुपरतं मंस्यन्ते त्वां महारथाः ।

येषां च त्वं बहुमतो भूत्वा यास्यसि लाघवम् ॥ 2.35 ॥

अवाच्यवादांश्च बहून्वदिष्यन्ति तवाहिताः ।

निन्दन्तस्तव सामर्थ्यं ततो दुःखतरं नु किम् ॥ 2.36 ॥

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् ।

तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः ॥ 2.37 ॥

(2.35) (All) Masters of great chariots will think that you withdrew from the battle on account of fear; and those by whom you are highly thought of (to-day), will hold you in less esteem.

(2.36) Also, your enemies, decrying your power, will speak much (about you) that should not be spoken; and what indeed more painful than that?

(2.37) Killed, you will go to heaven; victorious, you will enjoy the earth; therefore, Arise, O Arjuna! determined on battle.

[Though the above exposition has shown that, according to the Sāṃkhya philosophy, not only should one not lament the fact of death or of killing, but that fighting according to the rules laid down for one's own caste is a duty, yet, the Blessed Lord now answers the doubt whether the killer is responsible for the 'sin' of the deaths caused in warfare. Strictly speaking, the argument in reply to this question pertains to the Path of Karma-Yoga, and the introduction to that doctrine starts here.]

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।



ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥ 2.38 ॥

(2.38) Looking upon happiness and unhappiness, gain and loss, victory and defeat, as alike, then start the battle; acting thus you will not incur (any) sin.

[There are two paths of leading one's life in the world; the one is the Sāṃkhya, and the other is the Yoga. Out of

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these two, it is not proper to lament over the Ātman or the Body according to the philosophy of that very Sāṃkhya Bath, or the Path of Renunciation, by considering the-doctrines of which, Arjuna had come to the point of giving, up warfare and starting begging. The Blessed Lord has. proved to Arjuna, that happiness and pain have to be borne with an equable frame of mind; that, warfare was the only proper thing to do for Kṣatriyas having regard to the rules of conduct applying to them; and that, if warfare was; carried on with an equable frame of mind, a man incurs no. sin whatsoever. But as Sāṃkhya philosophy is of the opinion that it is the highest duty of everyone in this, world, under any circumstances, to give up worldly life and take up Saṃnyāsa (Renunciation), that philosophy does not solve the questions: (i) why Arjuna should not. take up Saṃnyāsa at that very moment, giving up warfare; or, (ii) why he should follow the rules of conduct laid down for his own caste; and then, the original objection of Arjuna may

be said to remain unanswered. Therefore, the Blessed Lord now says as follows – ]

§§ एषा तेऽभिहिता सांख्ये बुद्धिर्योगे त्विमां शृणु ।

बुद्ध्या युक्तो यया पार्थ कर्मबन्धं प्रहास्यसि ॥ 2.39 ॥

(2.39) This buddhi (that is, Knowledge, or argument) stated to you is according to the Sāṃkhya (that is, the Saṃnyāsa)-Niṣṭhā. Now hear that buddhi (that is, Knowledge) according to the (Karma-) Yoga, (which I am describing to you), being possessed of which, O Pārtha, you will (even without giving up Action) cast off the bonds of Action.

[This stanza is of very great importance in order to understand the import of the Bhagavadgītā. The word 'Sāṃkhya' is not to be understood here as meaning 'Kapila-Sāṃkhya', or only 'Vedānta', nor is the word 'Yoga' to be understood as meaning 'Pātañjala-Yoga'; but, 'Sāṃkhya' must be taken here as meaning the 'Saṃnyāsa-mārga' (Path of Renunciation) and 'Yoga' as meaning the 'Karma-Yoga' (Path of Proper Action), as is clear from Gītā 3.3. These two paths are independent of

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each other, and the followers of these paths are known respectively as 'Sāṃkhya' = 'Saṃnyāsa-mārgin' and 'Yoga' = 'Karma-Yoga-mārgin' (Gī. 5.5). As the followers of the Sāṃkhya-niṣṭhā out of these consider it more meritorious to

give up Action in the end completely some time or other, the philosophy of this path does not completely answer Arjuna's question: "Why should I fight?". Therefore, the Blessed Lord now starts to impart the Knowledge pertaining to the Niṣṭhā of Karma-Yoga, or shortly Yoga, according to which true manhood consists in continuing to perform Action lifelong, with a disinterested frame of mind, and without adopting Saṁnyāsa, even after the acquisition of true Knowledge; and this Path of Action has been emphasised from now on right to the last chapter of the Gītā, by showing many reasons for following that path and by giving satisfactory explanations of many doubts. When one bears in mind this explanation of the exposition of the subject-matter of the Gītā, given by the Blessed Lord Himself, there remains no doubt anymore that the Gītā supports the path of Karma-Yoga. The Blessed Lord first states the most important propositions of Karma-Yoga – ]

§§ नेहाभिक्रमनाशोऽस्ति प्रत्यवायो न विद्यते ।

स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात् ॥ 2.40 ॥

(2.40) Here, (that is, in this path of Karma-Yoga), Action. (once) commenced is not destroyed, (and afterwards) obstacles do not arise; even a little (practice) of this-religion protects (one) from great danger.

[The importance of this doctrine has been shown in Chapter X of the Gītā-Rahasya (p.392, bottom); and a fuller explanation is also given later on in the Gītā (Gī. 6.40 – 46). This stanza means that according to the path of Karma-Yoga, even if perfection is

not reached in one life, the Action performed is not wasted, but comes in useful in the subsequent births, and the merit being thus accumulated from birth to birth, true Release is reached ultimately, sometime or other. The Blessed Lord now propounds the second important doctrine of Karma-Yoga –]

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§§ व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिरेकेह कुरुनन्दन ।

बहुशाखा ह्यनन्ताश्च बुद्धयोऽव्यवसायिनाम् ॥ 2.41 ॥

(2.41) O Kurunandana, (that is, descendant of Kuru, or Arjuna~Translator.), in this (path) the (mental organ in the shape of) Reason, which performs the vyavasāya, (that is, the discernment between the Doable and the Not-Doable), has got to be one, (that is, concentrated); but, the buddhayaḥ (that is, the Desires) of those whose Reason is not (in this way) concentrated, are many-branched and (of) endless (kinds).

[The word 'buddhi' has many meanings in Sanskrit. Of these, it has been used in the meaning of 'Knowledge' in the 39th stanza; and later on in the 49th stanza, 'buddhi' is to be interpreted as meaning 'understanding', 'desire', 'wish', or 'motive'. But as the adjective 'vyavasāyātmikā' precedes the word 'buddhi' in the first line of this stanza, it there means the "organ of Reason which performs 'vyavasāya', that is, which discerns between the Doable and the Not-Doable" (Gītā-Raha.

Ch. VI, pp.179 to 187). When this organ of Reason has first decided whether any matter is good or evil, the Mind conceives the desire or wish to act accordingly; therefore, this Desire or wish is also called 'buddhi', But the adjective 'vyavasāyātmikā' does not in the latter case precede that word. If it becomes necessary to show the difference, the phrase 'vāsanātmaka buddhi' is used. In the second line of this stanza, the word 'buddhi' has been used by itself. It is not preceded by the adjective 'vyavasāyātmikā'. Therefore, the word 'buddhayaḥ' in the plural form means 'desires' or ' flights of imagination'; and the second line of this stanza means: "Those whose 'vyavasāyātmikā buddhi', that is to say, the discerning mental organ of Reason, is not steady, (that is, the avyavasāyinaḥ ~Translator.) conceive ever new waves of imagination or desires every moment". Unless one keeps in mind these two meanings of the word 'buddhi', namely, (i) the discerning and deciding mental organ, and (ii) Desire, it will not be possible to clearly understand the true import of the exposition of the word 'buddhi' in the

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doctrine of Karma-Yoga. The Blessed Lord now shows. how when the Discerning Reason is not steady or concentrated, the Mind is continually disintegrated by different desires, and the man runs after different pursuits, wishing to-day to do

something for getting a son, and to-morrow something else for attaining heaven, etc. –]

§§ यामिमां पुष्पितां वाचं प्रवदन्त्यविपश्चितः ।

वेदवादरताः पार्थ नान्यदस्तीति वादिनः ॥ 2.42 ॥

कामात्मानः स्वर्गपरा जन्मकर्मफलप्रदाम् ।

क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति ॥ 2.43 ॥

भोगैश्वर्यप्रसक्तानां तयापहतचेतसाम् ।

व्यवसायात्मिका बुद्धिः समाधौ न विधीयते ॥ 2.44 ॥

(2.42) O Pārtha! (those) fools who rejoice in the words- (showing the gain to be made) appearing in the Vedas (Karmakāṇḍa), and who say that nothing else is of importance, say in a flowery way that:

(2.43) "By means of many Actions (such as, Yajñas, Yāgas, etc.), one obtains the fruit of (re-) birth, and (birth after birth) pleasures and prosperity are obtained "; and these (people) with a desire-filled Mind, who run after heaven,

(2.44) are attracted by those words, and become immersed in pleasures and prosperity, and thereby their vāsanātmaka buddhi (that is, their Reason which decides between the Doable and the Not-Doable) cannot (ever) be concentrated (that is, fixed on: one point).

[The above three stanzas make up only one sentence, and contain a description of Jñāna-less ritualists following; the Mīmāṃsā path, who are continually engrossed in the

performance of sacrificial rites in the shape of Yajñas or Yāgas solely for the selfish purposes of attaining one object to-day and another object to-morrow according to the Karma-kāṇḍa prescribed by the Śrutis and the Smṛtis; and' this description has been made on the basis of the

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Upaniṣads. For instance, it is stated in the Muṇḍakopaniṣad that: –

iṣṭāpūrtam manyamānā variṣṭham nānyac chreyo  
vedayante pramūḍhāḥ ।  
nākasya prṣṭhe te sukrte 'nubhūtvemaṁ lokam  
hīnataram vā viśanti ॥ (Muṇ. 1.2.10).

that is, "these fools, who believe that only the 'performance of sacrificial ritual' (iṣṭāpūrtam) is meritorious and that nothing else is meritorious, come back to this mortal world after having enjoyed happiness in heaven"; and similar statements, derogative of Jñāna-less Karma {ritual} are also to be found in the Īśāvāsyā and Kaṭha Upaniṣads (Kaṭha. 2.5; Īśā. 9, 12). It is true that these people, who, without acquiring the Knowledge of the Parameśvara, are steeped in the performance of Karma (ritual), obtain the fruits of their respective ritual in the shape of heaven etc. But, as their Desire is entangled to-day in this ritual and the next day in some other ritual, and is straying

about in all directions, they never attain Release, how many soever times they may have gone to heaven. In order to obtain Release, the organ of Reason must be steady or concentrated on a single point. For the present, the Blessed Lord says only as follows –]

§§ त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।

निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥ 2.45 ॥

(2.45) O Arjuna! as the Vedas (consisting of the Karma-kāṇḍa) deal (in this way) only with the subject-matter of the three constituents, do you become 'nistraiguṇya' (that is, triguṇātīta), (that is, 'beyond the reach of the three constituents' ~Translator.), 'nitya-sattvastha' (that is, abiding in eternal Truth ~Translator. [1]), and free from the Opposites (of

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[1] The author has retained in his Marathi translation, the word 'nitya-sattvastha' from the original, and in the commentary he has explained it as being synonymous with 'nistraiguṇya' or 'triguṇātīta'; but this is difficult to understand, as there seems no reason for repeating the idea. The late Mr. Telang, therefore, translates 'sattva' here as 'courage'; and Dr. Besant as 'purity'. As 'sattva' is one of the three constituents, and as the Blessed Lord has just asked Arjuna to be 'beyond the three constituents', 'nityasattvastha' cannot be understood as referring to the 'sattva' constituent. Therefore, Prof. W. D. P. Hill (Bhagavadgītā: Ox. Univ. Press, 1928, p.120) has translated the word 'sattva' in its more general sense of 'Truth', which has been adopted by me. Sadashiva Shastri Bhide has got over the difficulty by explaining 'nityasattvastha' as 'free from the desires to enjoy pleasures arising from the three constituents', and try then explaining 'nityasattvastha' as meaning 'possessing the sāttvika qualities of equability, perseverance,



happiness and unhappiness etc.); and without being steeped in the selfish interests of 'yogakṣema' etc., become Self-devoted (ātmavān).

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['traiguṇya' means the 'worldly life (saṁsāra) of Prakṛti made up of the three constituents sattva, rajas, and tamas'; and it has been clearly shown in the Gītā-Rahasya (p.314 and 353) that the true Brāhmaṇa is beyond that, and that worldly life is made up of the perishable Opposites of happiness and unhappiness, life and death etc. It has been stated in the 43rd stanza of this very chapter, that people, who follow the Mīmāṃsā doctrine, perform the Yajñas etc. prescribed by the Śrutis, in order to obtain the happiness pertaining to this worldly life of Prakṛti or Māyā, and that they are entirely steeped in these practices; some perform a sacrificial ritual in order to obtain a son, whereas others perform some other sacrificial rite in order that rain should fall. All this ritual is necessary for 'the maintenance of worldly life', that is, for 'yogakṣema'. It is, therefore, clear that one who wishes to attain Release, must go beyond these ritualistic practices, which are the result of the sattva, rajas and tamas constituents, and which bring about only yogakṣema, and must concentrate his attention on the Parabrahman, Which is

beyond all this. And the words 'nirdvaṁdva' {beyond the Opposites. ~Translator.) and 'niryogakṣema,' (beyond the anxiety for new acquisitions and the protection of old acquisitions ~Translator.) have been used above to convey this idea. In this place, a doubt is likely to arise as to how yogakṣema will be carried on, if these desire-prompted (kāmya)

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ritualistic performances prescribed in the Karma-kāṇḍa are not carried on (Gī. Ra. pages 405 and 535). The reply to-that question is not given here; but when this subject comes again later on in Chapter IX, it is stated that the Blessed Lord looks after this yogakṣema (i.e., 'bestows the things wanted and preserves the security of the things possessed' ~Translator.); and it is only in these two places that the word 'yogakṣema' appears in the Gītā (See Gī. 9.22, and my commentary thereon). The word 'nityasattvavastha' means the same as 'triguṇātīta' (beyond the three constituents); because, it is stated later on that by the continual growth of the sattva constituent, one acquires the 'triguṇātītavasthā' (the state of being beyond the three constituents ~Translator.), and that that is the true 'siddhāvasthā' (the state of Perfection ~Translator.), (Gī. 14.14 and 20, Gī. Ra. pp.226 and 227). In-short, the advice given here is that one should give up the desire-prompted ritual prescribed by the Mīmāṃsā school for

obtaining yogakṣema, which is based on the three constituents, and go beyond the Opposites of happiness and unhappiness etc., and become brahma-niṣṭhā (devoted to the Brahman) or ātmā-niṣṭhā (devoted to the Ātman). But, it must be borne in mind at the same time that the injunction to become ātmā-niṣṭhā does not mean that all this ritual should totally and for all intents and purposes be given up. The adverse criticism made in the above stanza of the desire-prompted ritual prescribed by the Vedas, or the inferiority which is shown of that ritual, is not the inferiority of the ritual itself, but of the desire-prompted Reason behind it. If this desire-prompted Reason does not govern the Mind, mere sacrificial ritual does not in any way close the door to Release (Gī. Ra. pp.404 to 408). That is why the Blessed Lord has given it as His definite and most valuable opinion later on in the beginning of the 18th chapter (Gī. 18.6), that these very ritualistic performances-prescribed by the Mīmāṃsā writers should certainly be performed, for the purification of the Mind (cittaśuddhi), and for public welfare (lokasaṃgraha), giving up the Hope for Bruit (phalāṣā) and Attachment (saṅga). When you take together these two statements made in two different places

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in the Gītā, it becomes quite clear that the inferiority of the Mīmāṃsaka Karma-kāṇḍa shown in the stanzas in this chapter

has reference to the desire-prompted Reason, and not only to the ritual. With this object in mind, it has been stated in the Bhāgavata that:

vedoktam eva kuruvāṇo niḥsaṅgo 'rpitam īśvare ।  
naiṣkarmyaṁ labhate siddhiṁ rocanārthā phalaśrutiḥ ॥  
(Bhāg. 11.3.46),

that is, "the 'recital of fruits (phalaśrutiḥ)' to be obtained by the performance of Vedic ritual, which has been given in the Vedas, has been given 'rocanārthā', that is, only in order that {he person who performs the ritual should find it agreeable; and therefore, that man who, instead of performing such ritual for obtaining the promised fruit, performs it unattachedly (with a niḥsaṅga Reason), that is to say, after giving up the Hope-for Fruit and with the sole intention of dedicating it to the Īśvara, attains the 'naiṣkarmya-siddhi' (the Perfection of Desireless Action)". In short, the summary of the advice in the Gītā is, that although it has been stated in the Vedas that a particular sacrificial ritual should be performed for a particular purpose, yet, one should not be taken in by that Desire, but should perform the ritual because it is 'yaṣṭavya', that is, because the performance of the ritual is a duty; that, one should give up the desire-promptedness of one's Reason, but not the ritualistic sacrifices (Gī. 17.11); and that the other rites should also be performed in the same way. And the same meaning has been expressed in the subsequent stanzas.]

॥ यावानर्थं उपदानं सर्वतः संप्लुतोदके ।

तावान्सर्वेषु वेदेषु ब्राह्मणस्य विजानतः ॥ 2.46 ॥

(2.46) To that extent to which there is a use (that is, necessity) for a well when there is a flood of water everywhere (clearly, there is no necessity whatsoever), to the same extent is there any necessity of the Vedas (containing the ritualistic Karma-kāṇḍa) for the enlightened Brāhmaṇa (that is to say, for him, there is no more any necessity of the Vedic Karma-kāṇḍa which describes desire-fulfilling ritual).

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[There is no difference of opinion as to the broad meaning (phalitārtha) of this stanza; but, commentators have entered into a useless hair-splitting discussion about the terms used in it. "sarvataḥsāṃptutodake" is a compound phrase in the seventh case (locative case); but if it is looked upon not merely as the locative case, nor as an adjectival phrase qualifying the word 'udapāna', but as the 'sati saptamī' (locative absolute), one can syntactically work out the sentence, in a simple way as: "sarvataḥsāṃptutodake sati udapāne yāvān arthaḥ (na svalpam api prayojanam vidyate) tāvān vijānataḥ brāhmaṇasya sarveṣu vedeṣu arthaḥ", without taking any outside words as implied; and this also gives the following clear and simple meaning:— "Just as no one cares for wells when there is water everywhere, (because drinking-water can be had anywhere without difficulty and sumptuously), so has the man, who has

attained Knowledge, no more any use for mere 'Vedic' ritual like sacrificial Yajñas etc." The Vedic ritual has to be performed for obtaining the final Release-giving Knowledge, and not merely for obtaining heaven; and that man who has already obtained this Knowledge, has nothing new to learn by performing Vedic ritual. That is why it is stated later on in the 3rd chapter of the Gītā (3.17) that "to him who has acquired Knowledge, there is no more any duty left in the world". When one can without difficulty obtain as much pure water as desired from a large lake or from a river who will even look at a well? In such circumstances, no one attaches the slightest importance to a well. In the last chapter of the Sanatsujātīya (Ma. Bhā. Udyo. 45.26), this very stanza occurs again with a slight verbal difference; and the meaning of it has been given in the commentary on it by Madhvācārya in the same way as above; and in the Śukānupraśna, where the relative worth of Jñāna (Knowledge) and Karma is being described, it is clearly stated that "na te ( jñāninaḥ) karma praśaṁsanti kūpaṁ nadyaṁ pibann iva," that is, "just as one who gets water from the river, does not attach any importance to a well, so do 'they' , that is, the Jñānins, not attach the slightest importance to Karma" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 340.10).

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In the same way, in the 17th stanza of the Pāṇḍavagītā, the simile of a well is used for saying that the man who, ignoring

"Vasudeva, worships other gods, is like a fool who, "tr̥ṣīto jāhnavītīre kūpaṁ vāñcchati durmatīḥ", that is, "being thirsty, and being able to get drinking-water on the banks of the Bhāgīrathī (Ganges), still craves for a well ". It is not that this simile appears only in the Vedic Sanskrit texts; but it has been adopted even in the Pali Buddhistic books. The dictum that the man who has destroyed Thirst does not have anything further to acquire, is acceptable also to Buddhism; and in referring to it, it is called a 'dṛṣṭānta', and appears in the Pali text called Udāna (U. 7.9) in the form of the stanza "kiṁ kayirā udapādena āpā ce sabbadā siyum", which means, 'what is the use of a well after water can be had in all places'. We experience it even now-a-days in big towns, that when a person has taken a water-pipe in the house, he does not any more care for a well. From these facts, and especially from the exposition in the Śūkānupraśna, the reader will realise the appropriateness of the simile used in the Gītā, and see that the meaning of this stanza as given by me above is straight-forward and correct. But commentators on the Gītā analyse the sentence in this stanza in a slightly different way, whether because by accepting this interpretation some inferiority becomes attached to the Vedas, or because they wish to keep intact the doctrinal proposition, that 'a Jñānin need no more perform Action, because Knowledge includes the performance of Action'. They take the word 'tāvān' as implied in the first, and the word 'yāvān' as implied in the second part of the stanza, and analyse the stanza as follows: "udapāne yāvān

arthaḥ tāvān eva sarvataḥsāmptutodake yathā saṁpadyate  
tathā yāvān sarveṣu vedeṣu arthaḥ tāvān vijānataḥ  
brāhmaṇasya saṁpadyate", that is to say, "to that extent to  
which wells can be put to use for the purpose of bathing and  
of drinking water, to the same extent can use be made of large  
lakes (sarvataḥsāmptutodake) for the same purpose; in the  
same way, Jñānins can, by means of their Knowledge, obtain  
from the Vedas as

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much benefit as it is possible to obtain". But as, according to  
this interpretation, the word 'tāvān' has to be taken as implied  
in the first part of the stanza, and the word 'yāvān' in the  
second part of the stanza, I have not accepted it. The  
interpretation and working out (anvaya) of the stanza adopted  
by me is arrived at without taking any words as implied; and,  
as is quite clear from the previous stanzas, this stanza is  
intended to give expression to the inferiority of the pure (that  
is, Jñāna-less) Karma-kāṇḍa in the Vedas. But, the inference  
that because a person who has attained Knowledge has no use  
for the ritual of Yajñas or Yāgas, he need not perform them,  
and may give them up altogether, is not borne out by the Gītā;  
because, although a Jñānin does not care for the fruit to be  
obtained by this ritual, yet, he must go on performing the  
ritual, if not for the fruit, at least because the performance of  
Yajñas and Yāgas is his duty as laid down in the Śāstras; and,



therefore, he can never give up the ritual. The Blessed Lord has given it as His definite opinion in unmistakeable terms in the 18th chapter, that though a Jñānin may have no Hope for Fruit, yet, he must desirelessly perform Yajñas and Yāgas in the same way as he desirelessly performs other acts (See my commentary on the previous stanza and on Gī. 6.19); and the Blessed Lord now further clearly states this version about Desireless Action in the next stanza—] [1]

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§§ कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन ।

मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥ 2.47 ॥

(2.47) Your authority extends only to the performance of Action; (obtaining or not obtaining) the Fruit, is never within

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[1] Annie Besant and Bhagvandas (Bhagavadgītā, Theo. House, 1926, p 42) translate this stanza as: "All the Vedas are as useful to an enlightened Brāhmaṇa as is a tank in a place covered all over with water", which is similar to the interpretation of the author. Telang translates it as: "To the instructed Brāhmaṇa, there is in all the Vedas as much utility as in a reservoir of water into which waters flow from all sides" (S. B. E. Series, Vol VIII, p.48); and W. D. JP. Hill's translation is practically the same (the Bhagavadgītā, Ox. Univ. Press, 1928, p.121). Both. these later authors have attached, explanatory notes, to which the reader is referred. The divergence is based on the interpretation of 'sarvataḥ saṃptute', which is translated by some as "filled from all sides", and by others as, "when there is a flood on all sides". ~Translator.

your authority (that is, never within your control); (therefore,) do not be one who performs Action with the (avaricious) motive (in the mind) that a particular fruit should be obtained (of his Action); nor do you also insist on not-performing Action. [The four quarters of this stanza are mutually complementary; and, therefore, without their overlapping each other, the entire import of the Karma-Yoga is given in a short and beautiful form; nay, one may even safely say that these four parts of the stanza are the catuḥ-sūtrī of the Karma-Yoga. It is stated to begin with, that "your authority extends only to the performance of Action". But as the Fruit of an Action is inseparable from the Action, there is room for the doubt that, 'he who has the authority to perform the Action, has also the authority to take the fruit, since he who owns the tree, also owns the fruit'; therefore, in order to solve that difficulty, the Blessed Lord has pronounced in a clear way in the 2nd quarter of the stanza that, " your authority does not extend to the Fruit "; and then He has pronounced the 3rd proposition, which arises from that dictum, namely, "do not be one who performs Action having in mind the Hope for Fruit", (karmaphalahetuḥ, is a Bahuvrīhi-samāsa , thus, 'karmaphale hetur yasya sa karmaphalahetuḥ'), (that is, 'he is a karmaphalahetuḥ, whose motive is in the Fruit of the Action' ~Translator.). But someone may advance the argument that because an Action and the fruit of it are mutually interlinked, one must give up the fruit (Action? ~Translator.) at the same time as giving up the Hope for Fruit. In order to make it clear

that such an inference would not be correct, the clear advice has been given, that one should give up the Hope for Fruit but, at the same time, "one should not insist on not doing Action, that is, on giving up Action". In short, saying that one should perform Action, does not amount to saying

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that one should entertain the Hope for Fruit; and conversely, saying that one should give up the Hope for Fruit, does not amount to saying that one should eschew Action. The meaning of this stanza is, that one should necessarily perform one's duty, having given up the ' Hope for Fruit ' ; and that, one should not be attached to the Action, and at the same time should not give up the Action –"tyāgo na yukta iha karmasu nāpi rāgaḥ" (Yoga. 5.5, 54); and the meaning has been emphasised again in the 18th chapter, where it is stated that the obtaining of Fruit is not a matter -within one's own control, and that it is necessary to have the co-operation of many other things for that purpose (Gī. 18.14 – 16 and Rahasya, Chapter V. p.154 and Ch. XII). The Blessed Lord now clearly defines the characteristics of Karma-Yoga by saying that, such Action means 'Yoga' or 'Karma-Yoga' –]

§§ योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनंजय ।

सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥ 2.48 ॥

दूरेण ह्यवरं कर्म बुद्धियोगाद्धनंजय ।

बुद्धौ शरणमन्विच्छ कृपणाः फलहेतवः ॥ 2.49 ॥

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते ।

तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् ॥ 2.50 ॥

(2.48) O Dhanañjaya I casting off Attachment and looking upon as alike the being fruitful and unfruitful (of Action), perform Action being 'yogastha' (that is, 'steadfast in the path of Karma-Yoga' ~Translator.); the (mental) state of being Equable (towards the Action being fruitful or unfruitful) is known as (Karma-) Yoga.

(2.49) For, (external) Karma is by far inferior to the Yoga (of the Equability) of Reason; (therefore) surrender yourself to (this equable) Reason; the 'phalāhetavaḥ' (that is, those, who perform Action only with an eye to the Fruit) are 'kṛpāṇa' (that is, low, or on a lower level).

(2.50) He, who' is steeped in the (equable) Reason remains untouched both by sin or merit in this (world); therefore, take shelter in Yoga. The cleverness (skillfulness or trick) of performing

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Action (without acquiring merit or sin) is known as (Karma-) Yoga.

[The description of the nature of Karma-Yoga given in these stanzas is very important, and I have to refer the reader to the discussion of that subject in Chapter III of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.76 to 87). But, the proposition of Karma-Yoga mentioned in the 49th stanza, namely that, 'the Reason is superior to the Action', is of utmost importance. As the word 'buddhi' (Reason) in these stanzas is not preceded by the adjective 'vyavasāyātmikā', it must be understood in this stanza as meaning 'desire' or 'understanding'. Some persons try to interpret the word 'buddhi' here as meaning 'Jñāna', and to interpret the stanza as meaning that 'Karma is of less importance than Jñāna'; but this interpretation is not correct. Because, as the description of Equability given in the 48th stanza is continued in the 49th and the subsequent stanzas, the word 'buddhi' must be interpreted as meaning an 'equabilising buddhi'. The goodness or badness of an act does not depend on the act itself, and though the act may be one and the same, it becomes good or bad according to the good or evil intention of the doer; therefore, the Reason is superior to the Action. As this and other principles of morality have been dealt with in Chapters IV, XII, and XV of the Gītā-Rahasya (p.119; p.530; and pp.668 to 675), I do not propose to deal with them here in a more exhaustive way. It has been stated above in the 41st stanza that in order that the Desiring Reason (vāsanātmaka buddhi) should remain equable and pure, the Discerning Reason (vyavasāyātmaka buddhi), which decides about the Doable and the Not-Doable must in the first instance

become steady. This has been already stated above in the 41st stanza. Therefore, the word 'sāmyabuddhi' (Equable Beason) means and includes both the steady Discerning Reason (vyavasāyātmaka buddhi) and Pure Desire (vāsanātmaka buddhi) as this Equable. Reason is the basic structure on which whether Pure Conduct or Karma-Yoga is based, the Blessed Lord has, with reference to His statement in the 39th stanza (that He would explain to Arjuna the 'device' or 'Yoga' by

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means of which Arjuna would not be affected by Action, though he might perform it), explained to Arjuna in this stanza that, that 'device' or 'skill' consists in 'keeping one's Reason, steady, holy, equable, and untainted', and that it is known as 'Yoga'; and He has in this way defined the word 'Yoga' twice over. Although the words "yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam" appearing in the 50th stanza are thus capable of being interpreted in a straightforward way, some commentators have attempted to stretch the words, and to interpret them to mean that, 'karmasu yogaḥ kauśalam', that is to say, "kauśala or skill, means the Yoga in the performance of Action". But, as there was no occasion here to give a definition of the word 'kauśala', and the matter in point was to show the meaning of the word 'Yoga', this interpretation cannot be looked upon as correct. Besides, when it is possible to inter-relate the words in a simple and straightforward way as 'karmasu kauśalam', it is

not proper to transpose the words so as to inter-relate them as 'karmasu yogah'. The Blessed Lord now says that when a man performs Action in this way with an equable Reason, there is no neglect of worldly activities, and at the same time, one cannot but achieve complete Perfection or Release –]

§§ कर्मजं बुद्धियुक्ता हि फलं त्यक्त्वा मनीषिणः ।

जन्मबन्धविनिर्मुक्ताः पदं गच्छन्त्यनामयम् ॥ 2.51 ॥

यदा ते मोहकलिलं बुद्धिर्व्यतितरिष्यति ।

तदा गन्तासि निर्वेदं श्रोतव्यस्य श्रुतस्य च ॥ 2.52 ॥

(2.51) The Jñānins, when acting in union with (Equable) Reason, having abandoned the Fruit of Action, and becoming free from the shackles of births, reach the state (of the Parameśvara) where there is no unhappiness.

(2.52) When your Reason shall have crossed the turgid enclosure of Ignorance, you will become indifferent towards whatever you may have heard or have to hear.

[That is to say, you will not desire to hear anything more; because, you will have already obtained the Fruit which can be obtained by hearing these things. The word 'nirveda' By used to signify 'being tired of worldly life', or,

'Renunciation'. In this stanza, it ordinarily means 'tiredness' or 'not wanting'. It will be seen from the subsequent stanzas that this 'tiredness' is only with reference to the ritual prescribed in the Śruti, which relates to the objects of the three constituents.]

श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला ।

समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि ॥ 2.53 ॥

(2.53) When your Reason, confused by (all kinds of) sentences from the Vedas, will become fixed and immovable in the state of mental absorption, then will you attain this Yoga (in the shape of an Equable Reason).

[In short, as has been stated above in 2.44, when a person, being taken in by the description of obtainable fruits given in Vedic hymns, falls into the turmoil of performing a particular act for obtaining a particular fruit, his Reason gets all the more confused instead of becoming steady. Therefore, Arjuna is advised to give up paying attention to such statements of advice, and to attain a fixed concentration of the Mind, so that he would attain the Karma-Yoga consisting of Equability of Reason, and be able to perform Action without incurring any sin, and without being in need of any further advice. It is stated that the Karma-yogin, whose Reason or prajña has become steady (i.e., sthita) in this way, is called a 'Sthitaprajña'; and Arjuna now asks how such a person acts or behaves.]



अर्जुन उवाच

§§ स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव ।

स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत ब्रजेत किम् ॥ 2.54 ॥

Arjuna said:— (54) O Keśava! who should be called a 'samādhistha sthitaprajña' (that is, the Steady-in-Reason, steeped in Mental Absorption. ~Translator.)? How does such a Sthitaprajña, speak, sit or walk? (tell me that).

[In this stanza, the word 'bhāṣā' has been used in the meaning of 'lakṣaṇa' (characteristics); and I have translated it as meaning 'who should be called', having regard to the root, 'bhāṣ', of the word 'bhāṣā'. It has been made

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clear in Chapter XII of the Gītā-Rahasya (p.510 to 527) that the mode of life of the Sthitaprajña is the basis of the doctrine of Karma-Yoga, and from, this fact the importance of the description which follows will become apparent.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

प्रजहाति यदा कामान्सर्वान्पार्थ मनोगतान् ।

आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥ 2.55 ॥

दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः ।

वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते ॥ 2.56 ॥

यः सर्वत्रानभिस्नेहस्तत्तत्प्राप्य शुभाशुभम् ।

नाभिनन्दति न द्वेष्टि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ 2.57 ॥

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ 2.58 ॥

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।

रसवर्जं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥ 2.59 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(2.55) Pārtha! when (a person) abandons all desires (that is, vāsanā) of his heart, and is pleased by himself in his own self, then he is called a Sthitaprajña.

(2.56) He, whose heart is not agitated in the midst of calamities, who is void of longing in pleasures, and from whom affection, fear, and wrath have departed, is called a Steady-in-Reason sage (sthitaprajña muni ~Translator.)

(2.57) His Reason is (said to be) steady whose Mind is without Attachment in all things, and who feels no exultation or aversion about the agreeable or disagreeable which befalls him.

(2.58) When a person draws in (his) senses from the objects (such as, sound, touch etc.) of the senses, as the tortoise draws in its limbs (such as, hands, feet, etc.) from all sides, then his Reason is (said to be) steady.

(2.59) The objects of sense leave the foodless person, yet, the relish (that is, the sweetness) in them, does not leave him; but

after he has experienced the Parabrahman, (all the objects together with) the relish also (in them), (that is, the objects of sense as also the relish, in them) leaves him.

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[The senses are fed by food. Therefore, when a person does not take food, or fasts, the senses become weak, and incapable of enjoying their respective objects. But getting rid in this way of the enjoyment of objects of sense, is the external action of enforced weakness. The desire (relish) for the objects of sense is not thereby reduced; therefore, one should acquire that Knowledge of the Brahman, by which such. Desire will be destroyed; when a person has thus experienced the Brahman, his Mind, and at the same time, his senses also come automatically under control; and it is not necessary to fast or do anything else in order to obtain control over the senses. That is what this stanza means. And the same meaning is clearly conveyed later on in the stanzas in Chapter VI (See Gī. 6.16, 17; as also 3.6, 7), where it is stated that the Yogin should eat moderately, and that he should not give up food or pastime altogether. In short, it must be borne in mind that the Gītā looks upon fasting and other practices, which weaken the body, as one-sided, and therefore, eschewable; and lays down the doctrine that, moderate food and pastime, and the Knowledge of the Brahman, are the best means of controlling the senses. Some commentators interpret the word 'rasa' in

the stanza as meaning 'the sweet, bitter, and other tastes experienced by the tongue', and interpret the stanza to mean that though one can overcome the objects of the other senses by fasting, the relish of the tongue, that is, the desire for food and drink, is intensified, instead of being destroyed, by fasting for many days; and, there is also a stanza to the same effect in the Bhāgavata (Bhāg. 11.8.20). But in my opinion, it is not correct to interpret this stanza in the Gītā in that way; because, that meaning becomes inconsistent with the second part of the stanza. Besides, the word used in the Bhāgavata is not 'rasa' but 'rasanam'; and we also do not find there the second part of the stanza in the Gītā. It is, therefore, not proper to consider the stanza in the Gītā, as meaning the same thing as the stanza in the Bhāgavata. The Blessed Lord now says in more explicit terms, in the two following stanzas, that it is not possible to obtain complete control

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over the senses, except by the Realisation of the Brahman –]

यततो ह्यपि कौन्तेय पुरुषस्य विपश्चितः ।

इन्द्रियाणि प्रमाथीनि हरन्ति प्रसभं मनः ॥ 2.60 ॥

तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य युक्त आसीत मत्परः ।

वशे हि यस्येन्द्रियाणि तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ 2.61 ॥

(2.60) Because, O son of Kuntī, these boisterous senses forcibly carry away in an improper direction, the Mind of even the intelligent person, who makes efforts merely (for controlling the senses).

(2.61) (Therefore), one should control all these senses and become 'yukta' (that is, yoga-yukta) and solely devoted to Me. His Reason is (said to have become) steady, whose senses are thus subject to his control.

[In this stanza, it is stated that one should obtain control over the senses by moderate eating, and should at the same time, become 'matparāyaṇa', that is, should fix his mind on the Īśvara, in order to obtain the Knowledge of the Brahman; and the reason for that will be clear from my interpretation of the 59th stanza. Even Manu has given a warning to the man who merely controls his senses, when he says: "balavān indriyagrāmo vidvāṃsam api karṣati" (Manu. 2. 2 – 15), (that is, "the powerful group of the senses drags about even the wise man" ~Translator.); and the same meaning is conveyed by the 60th stanza above. In short, the implied import of these three stanzas (that is, 59, 60, and 61 ~Translator.) is as follows; namely that, one who has to become a 'Sthitaprajña' must moderate his food and pastimes, and acquire the Knowledge of the Brahman; that, the Mind becomes free from the slavery of "the senses only when one acquires the Knowledge of the Brahman; and that, the device of mortifying the body is only external and not efficacious; and the words 'matparāyaṇa' also give the first indication of the Path of Devotion (See Gī. 9.34).

The word 'yukta', which has been used in the above stanza, means 'one who has been perfected by means of Yoga'. In Gītā 6. 17, the word 'yukta' means 'moderate'. But this word is used in the Gītā mostly to

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mean 'the person who has become an adept in bearing both pain and pleasure with a placid mind, by practising the Yoga of Equable Reason, which has been prescribed in the Gītā '. (See Gī. 5.23). A person who has become an adept in this way is known as a 'sthitaprajña', and his state is known as the 'siddhāvasthā' (the state of Perfection); that state has been described at the end of this chapter, and also again at the end of Chapter V and of Chapter XII. The Blessed Lord has so far explained what is necessary for becoming a Sthitaprajña, after having lost pleasure in the objects of the senses. HE now first explains in the following stanza how pleasure arises in the objects of the senses, how this pleasure gives rise to the emotions of kāma (Desire), krodha (Anger), etc., how man is thereby ultimately ruined, as also how it is possible to overcome them.]

ध्यायतो विषयान्पुंसः सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते ।

सङ्गात्संजायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते ॥ 2.62 ॥

क्रोधाद्भवति संमोहः संमोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः ।

स्मृतिभ्रंशाद्बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति ॥ 2.63 ॥

रागद्वेषवियुक्तैस्तु विषयानिन्द्रियैश्चरन् ।

आत्मवश्यैर्विधेयात्मा प्रसादमधिगच्छति ॥ 2.64 ॥

(2.62) The saṅga (that is, intimacy) of the man, who contemplates on the objects of the senses, with these objects of sense, continually grows. From this intimacy, there grows later on kāma (that is, the Desire to possess those, objects of the senses); (and when there is an obstruction in. the matter of the satisfaction of this Desire) from this Desire there arises Anger;

(2.63) from Anger, there arises sammoha (that is, Indiscrimination); from Indiscrimination, confused memory; from confusion of memory, destruction of Reason; and from destruction of Reason, there arises the total destruction (of the man).

(2.64) But he (the man), whose Ātman (that is, whose internal sense) is within his control, is satisfied (in his Mind), though he moves about among the objects of the senses, with senses which have escaped from love and hate, and which are perfectly within

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his control.

प्रसादे सर्वदुःखानां हानिरस्योपजायते ।

प्रसन्नचेतसो ह्याशु बुद्धिः पर्यवतिष्ठते ॥ 2.65 ॥

(2.65) When the Mind is satisfied, all his un-happiness is destroyed, because the Reason of the man, whose Mind is satisfied, is also immediately steadied.

[It must be borne in mind that these two stanzas (that is, 64 and 65 ~Translator.) clearly lay down the following propositions, namely, (i) the Sthitaprajña does not give up either Action or the objects of sense, but merely the 'saṅga' (intimacy), and moves about among the objects of the senses with an unattached frame of mind; and that (ii) the peace of mind which he obtains is not the result of giving up Action, but of giving up the Desire for Fruit of Action; because, except for this, there is no difference between this Sthitaprajña and the Sthitaprajña who follows the Path of Renunciation. Both of them need the qualities of absence of Desire and peace of Mind; but the Sthitaprajña of the Gītā does not renounce Action, but desirelessly performs every kind of Action for universal good, and the other Sthitaprajña does not do so: this is the important difference between the two (See Gī. 3.25). But the commentators on the Gītā, who favour the Path of Renunciation, look upon this difference as a minor difference, and for supporting their own doctrine, insist that the description of a Sthitaprajña given here is of the Sthitaprajña according to the Path of Renunciation. The Blessed Lord now



describes those whose mind is not at peace, thereby more fully describing the nature of the Sthitaprajña –]

नास्ति बुद्धिरयुक्तस्य न चायुक्तस्य भावना ।

न चाभावयतः शान्तिरशान्तस्य कुतः सुखम् ॥ 2.66 ॥

(2.66) The man, who is not 'yukta', (that is, who has not become yoga-yukta as mentioned above), possesses neither (steady) Reason, nor bhāvanā (that is, Niṣṭhā, or fixedness, in the shape of a firm Reason); who has not fixedness, can have no tranquility; and how can he who is not tranquil,

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acquire happiness?

इन्द्रियाणां हि चरतां यन्मनोऽनु विधीयते ।

तदस्य हरति प्रज्ञां वायुर्नाविमिवाम्भसि ॥ 2.67 ॥

तस्माद्यस्य महाबाहो निगृहीतानि सर्वशः ।

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥ 2.68 ॥

(2.67) The Mind which follows in the wake of the senses, which roam about (that is, move), (among the objects of sense), enslaves the Reason of a man, just as the wind (enslaves) a boat in the water.

(2.68) Therefore, O Arjuna! his Reason is (said to have become) steady, whose senses (are) controlled on all sides from the objects of sense.

[In short, control of the senses by means of the control of the Mind is at the root of all means of reaching Perfection. When the senses have become disintegrated on account of the objects of sense and run in all directions, it is not possible for a man even to get the desire of obtaining Self-knowledge. As the desire is wanting, there is no resolute endeavour in that direction, and then there is neither tranquility nor happiness. Though this is what is meant, control of the senses does not mean totally destroying the senses and giving up all Action altogether; and, as is stated in the 64th stanza, the message of the Gītā is that one should perform all Action desirelessly, as has been shown in Chapter IV of the Gītā-Rahasya.]

या निशा सर्वभूतानां तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।

यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥ 2.69 ॥

(2.69) The Sthitaprajña is awake in that which is night for everyone else; and such a Jñānin looks upon that as night in which every other living being is awake.

[This paradoxical description is metaphorical Ignorance means 'darkness' and Knowledge means 'light' (Gī. 14.11). That which the Ignorant dislike, that is, what to them is darkness, is desired by the Jñānin; and that in which the Ignorant are engrossed –that is, what for them is light –is 'darkness' for the

Jñānin, that is to say, he does not want it. This is what is meant. For instance,

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a Jñānin looks upon desire-prompted Action as contemptible, whereas ordinary people are steeped in such Action; and that Desireless Action, which the Jñānin likes, is disliked by others.]

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।  
तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे स शान्तिमाप्नोति न  
कामकामी ॥ 2.70 ॥

(2.70) Just as all water enters, from all sides, the sea, of which the shores are not transgressed, though it is being filled on -all sides, so is (true) tranquility obtained only by that person, who is entered by all objects of sense (without disturbing his tranquility); not by one, who desires the objects of sense (is it possible that this tranquility is acquired.)

[This stanza does not mean that one should abandon Action in order to attain tranquility; what is meant is that the minds of ordinary people are confused by the Hope of Fruit, or by Desire, and their peace of mind is destroyed by the Action they perform; but the Mind of the man who has-reached the Siddhāvasthā (the state of Perfection) is not distressed by Hope of Fruit. Whatever the number of Actions he has to perform, his peace of Mind is not disturbed, and he performs

them remaining as peaceful as the sea; and he does not, therefore, suffer from pain or happiness. (See stanza 64 above and Gī. 4.19). The Blessed Lord now summarises this subject, and tells Arjuna what this state of the Sthitaprajña is called –]

§§ विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान् पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।

निर्ममो निरहंकारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥ 2.71 ॥

(2.71) He alone acquires tranquility, who performs Action having given up all Desire (that is, all Attachment) and, become desireless, and who has not got mine-ness and egoism.

[The word 'carati' (performs Action) has been interpreted commentators who support the doctrine of Renunciation as meaning 'goes about begging'; but, that interpretation is wrong. The meaning which has been given to the words 'caran' and 'caratām' in the 64th and the 67th stanzas

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above must also be taken here. The Gītā has nowhere preached that the Sthitaprajña should become a mendicant. On the other hand, it has been clearly stated in the 64th stanza, that he should freely 'move about among the objects of sense', keeping his senses under control. Therefore, the word 'carati' must be interpreted here as 'performs Action' or 'takes part in worldly affairs'. Śrī Samartha (Rāmadāsa) has given, in the latter half of the Dāsabodha, an excellent description of how

the 'desireless scient' (Sthitaprajña) takes part in worldly affairs; and the same is the subject-matter of Chapter XIV of the Gītā-Rahasya.]

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति ।

स्थित्वास्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति ॥ 2.72 ॥

(2.72) O Pārtha! this is (called) that Brahmic state; having attained this, the man does not remain in ignorance; and remaining in this state even at the end (that is, at the moment of death), he attains Release in the shape of 'brahmanirvāṇa' (that is, of merger in the Brahman).

[The Brahmic state is the ultimate and the best state in Karma-yoga (See Gī. Ra. Ch. IX pp.319 and 344); and the important point about it is, that when this state has been reached, there is no more any Ignorance. This important point is particularly mentioned here, because, even if a. man on any particular day experiences the Brahmic state for a short time, he does not thereby get any permanent benefit. Because, if that man is not in that state of mind at the moment of death, he cannot escape re-birth according to the desire which may be in his mind at the moment of death (See Gī. Ra. p.398). Therefore, in describing the Brahmic state in this stanza, it is particularly mentioned that the Sthitaprajña maintains this state of mind even at the moment of death (cf. "antakāle 'pi", that is, 'even at the moment of death'). The importance of the Mind being pure at the moment of death has been described in the Upaniṣads (Chān. 3.14.1; Praśna. 3.10), and later on in the Gītā

itself (Gī. 8.5 – 10). As desire-prompted Action is the reason for being re-born several times, it is clear

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that Desire should be annihilated at least at the moment of death. And it naturally follows that in order that Desire should be annihilated at the moment of death, one must have practised the annihilation of Desire before one reaches the point of death; because, the act of destroying Desire is extremely difficult, and it is not only difficult but absolutely impossible for anyone to be easily able to annihilate Desire, except by 'special divine blessing'. (viśeṣānugraha). The doctrine that Desire should be pure at the moment of death has been accepted not only in the Vedic religion but also in other religions (See Gītā Ra. p.614.)

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे सांख्ययोगो नाम द्वितीयोऽध्यायः ॥ २ ॥

Thus ends, the Second Chapter entitled SĀM̐KHYA-YOGA in the dialogue, between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman, (that is, on the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung, (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

[As there is a description of the Sāṁkhya or the Saṁnyāsa doctrine in the beginning of this Chapter, it is called 'Sāṁkhya-Yoga'. But one must not, on that account, think that the whole

of the chapter contains no other subject. There are usually many subjects in one and the same chapter; but the chapter is named by reference to the subject which is in the beginning, or is the most important one in the chapter (See Gītā-Rahasya Ch. XIV, p.625.)

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## CHAPTER III – KARMA-YOGA.

तृतीयोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER III.

अर्जुन उवाच

§§ ज्यायसी चेत्कर्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन ।

तत्किं कर्मणि घोरे मां नियोजयसि केशव ॥ 3.1 ॥

व्यामिश्रेणेव वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहयसीव मे ।

तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥ 3.2 ॥

[After the Blessed Lord had proved to Arjuna that the dread which he had felt about killing Bhīṣma, Droṇa, and others was foolish, having regard to the immortality and the non-lamentability of the Ātman according to Sāṃkhya philosophy, and made to Arjuna a short exposition of his own duty, the principal subject-matter of the Gītā, namely, the exposition of the Karma-Yoga, was started in the Second Chapter; and, after stating that the only skillful way, or Yoga, by which it was possible to perform Action without incurring either merit or sin, was to perform it with a disinterested frame of mind, there is given a description, at the end, of the Karma-Yogin Sthitaprajña, whose Reason has thus become Equable. But,



that does not exhaust the exposition of the Karma-Yoga. It is true that if any act is performed with an equable frame of mind, one does not incur sin. But, if it cannot be disputed that Equability of Reason is superior to Action (Gī. 2.49), then it would be quite enough if one makes one's Reason equable like that of a Sthitaprajña; and it does not follow that it is necessary to perform Action. Therefore, when this doubt has been raised by Arjuna in the shape of a question, the Blessed Lord lays down in this and in the next chapter, that 'Action must be performed'.]

Arjuna said:—

(3.1) O Janārdana! if it is Your opinion that the (Equable-) Reason is superior to Action; then, O Keśava! why are You engaging me in a terrible Action (of war)?

(3.2) By this seemingly mixed (that is, double-meaning) advice, You are, so to say, confusing my understanding;

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therefore, tell me definitely only that thing by which I shall attain śreya (that is, bliss).

श्रीभगवानुवाच

§§ लोकेऽस्मिन्द्विविधा निष्ठा पुरा प्रोक्ता मयानघ ।

ज्ञानयोगेन सांख्यानं कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् ॥ 3.3 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(3.3) O sinless Arjuna! I have said before (that is, in the Second Chapter) that in this world, the path is of two kinds: that of the Sāṁkhya, by the Jñāna-Yoga, and that of the Yogins, by the Karma-Yoga.

[I have translated the word 'purā'=' before', as meaning, ' in the Second Chapter ', and that is the straightforward meaning; because, the Blessed Lord has, in the Second Chapter, first described the Sāṁkhya philosophy, and then the Karma-Yoga philosophy.: But, the word 'purā' can also be interpreted to mean ' from the beginning of the world '; because, where the Nārāyaṇīya or Bhāgavata. religion has been described in the Mahābhārata, it is stated that the Blessed Lord created the two independent paths of Sāṁkhya and Yoga [nivṛtti (Renunciation) and pravṛtti (Action)], in the beginning of the world (See Śān. 340 and 347). As I have shown in great detail in Chapter XI of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.420 to 437) that (i) the word 'mokṣa' (Release) is to be taken as understood behind the word 'niṣṭhā' , that (ii) 'niṣṭhā' means 'that path by following which one ultimately attains Release', and that (iii) there are only two such paths, according to the Gītā, which are. independent of each other, and are not parts of each other, I shall not repeat the same subject-matter here. The difference between these two paths has also been shown by me in the form of a tabular statement at the end of Chapter XI of the Gītā-Rahasya (p.491). The Blessed Lord has thus mentioned the two paths of attaining Release. Now He clearly

defines the nature of that naiṣkarmya-siddhi (Perfection by Desireless Action) which is incidental to them—]

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न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।

न च संन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥ 3.4 ॥

न हि कश्चित्क्षणमपि जातु तिष्ठत्यकर्मकृत् ।

कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः ॥ 3.5 ॥

(3.4) (But) It is not that a man attains naiṣkarmya (that is, performing Action after destroying its binding force ~Translator.) by not commencing Action; nor does one attain Perfection by merely making a Renunciation (tyāga) of Action;

(3.5) because, whoever he may be, he does not remain even for a moment without performing (some or other) Action. The constituents of Prakṛti compel every being, that has become dependent, to (always) perform (some or other) Action.

[Commentators, who support the Path of Renunciation, have interpreted the word 'naiṣkarmya' occurring in the first part of this stanza, as meaning 'Jñāna'; and in order to support their own doctrine, they have interpreted the stanza as meaning, "Knowledge is not acquired by not starting Action, that is to say, Knowledge can be acquired only by performing Action, in as much as Action is the instrument by means of which Knowledge can be acquired". But this interpretation is neither

straight-forward nor correct. The word 'naiṣkarmya' occurs any number of times both in the Vedānta and the Mīmāṃsā philosophies, and Sureśvarācārya has even written a book entitled Naiṣkarmya-siddhi. But these principles of Naiṣkarmya are not new, but have been in vogue from before the time not only of Sureśvarācārya but even of the Sūtras on the Mīmāṃsā and the Vedānta. It need not be said that Karma (Action) is necessarily binding. Therefore, it is necessary to devise some means whereby the binding-force or faults of Karma or Action can be destroyed, in the same way as Doctors purify mercury by 'killing' it before it is used; and the state of performing Action by this device is known as 'Naiṣkarmya'. As Action, thus crippled, does not become an obstruction to Release, how to acquire this state is an important question in the science of Release. The Mīmāṃsā school answers

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this question by saying that if one performs the 'Daily' (nitya) ritual, daily, and the 'Occasional' (naimittika) ritual, when there is occasion for it, and eschews the 'Desire-prompted' (kāmya) and 'Prohibited' (niṣiddha) acts, one will escape the bond of Action, and can without difficulty obtain the 'naiṣkarmyāvasthā' (the state of Abstention from Action). But Vedānta science has proved that. this device of the Mīmāṃsā school is wrong; and this matter has been discussed in Chapter X of the Gītā-Rahasya. (pp.378, 379). There are others who

maintain, that Action (' Karma ') will not bind a person, if he does not perform it, and that therefore, one should abandon all Action, in order to attain the state of Inaction (naiṣkarmyāvasthā). In their opinion 'naiṣkarmya' means 'Absence of Action' (karma-sunyata). But it has been stated in the fourth stanza that this is not correct, and that Perfection (siddhi), that is, Release (mokṣa) cannot be attained in that way; and the reason for saying so has been given in the fifth stanza. Even if one contemplates giving up of Action, yet, in as much as Action, like sitting, sleeping etc., does not stop so long as the Body exists (Gī 5.9 and 18.11), no man whosoever can at any time totally abstain from Action. Therefore, Naiṣkarmya in the shape of total Abstention from Action is impossible. In short, the scorpion of 'Karma' never dies. Therefore, one must devise some means whereby that scorpion will become poisonless. The doctrine of the Gītā is that this device consists in destroying the Attachment which ties a person to the Action, and this device has been later on described several times in an exhaustive manner. But even to this position an objection may be raised that: though Naiṣkarmya may not mean 'total Abstention from Action' , yet, in as much as, those who follow the Path of Renunciation, obtain Release by giving up all Action, the giving up of all Action is necessary for obtaining Release. But to this line of reasoning the reply of the Gītā is that, though the followers of the Path of Renunciation attain Release, that is not because they have given up Action;

for, their attaining Release is the result of their Jñāna.  
(Knowledge). If Release were to be obtained merely by

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abstaining from Action, even a stone ought to obtain it. Therefore, the following three facts stand proved, namely, (1) Naiṣkarmya does not mean total Abstention from Action; (2) no one can possibly give up Action even if he says that he will do so; and (3) giving up Action is not a means for obtaining Siddhi (Perfection); and this is what has been stated in the above stanza. When these three conclusions have been arrived at, the only way in which Naiṣkarmya-siddhi (Perfection by Desireless Action) can be attained is, by not giving up Action, but continually performing Action after destroying the 'āśakti' (Attachment) by means of Jñāna (Knowledge). Because, though Jñāna alone does not give Release, yet, in as much as it is impossible to totally abstain from Action, it is necessary to perform Action, after having destroyed one's Attachment (āśakti) to Action, in order to get rid of the Bond of Action. This is what is known as ' KARMA-YOGA '; and the Blessed Lord now says that this method, which combines Jñāna (Knowledge) with Karma (Action) is of higher importance, that is, superior –]

कर्मेन्द्रियाणि संयम्य य आस्ते मनसा स्मरन् ।

इन्द्रियार्थान्विमूढात्मा मिथ्याचारः स उच्यते ॥ 3.6 ॥

यस्त्विन्द्रियाणि मनसा नियम्यारभतेऽर्जुन ।

कर्मेन्द्रियैः कर्मयोगमसक्तः स विशिष्यते ॥ 3.7 ॥

(3.6) That fool, who merely controls the Action (of the hands and feet etc.), but continually thinks by his Mind of the objects of the senses, is called mithyācāra (that is, a hypocrite).

(3.7) But the worth of that man, who controls his senses by means of his Mind, and starts the Karma-Yoga by means (solely) of the organs of Action, with an unattached Reason is, O Arjuna! very great.

[ These two stanzas amplify the statement in the previous chapter that: 'in the Karma-Yoga, the Reason is superior to Action' (Gī. 3. 49). This stanza clearly says that the man, whose Mind is not pure, but who restrains the activities of his organs of Action only out of fear of others, or in order that other persons should call him good,

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is not really a virtuous man, but a hypocrite. Those who point to the dictum: "kalau kartā ca lipyate" , that is, "in the Kaliyuga, fault is found not with Reason, but with the Action", and who say that, whatever the state of one's Reason, one's Action should not be had, should carefully note the principle laid down in the above stanza of the Gītā. It becomes clear from the 7th stanza, that the name 'Karma-Yoga' has been-

given in the Gītā only the 'Yoga of performing Action desirelessly'. Some supporters of the Path of Renunciation interpret this stanza as meaning that though this Karma-Yoga may be superior to the Path of Hypocrisy described in the 6th stanza, yet, it is not superior to the Path of Renunciation.-But this argument is only a doctrine-supporting argument; because, the doctrine that Karma-Yoga is more worthy than, or superior to, the Path of Renunciation has been laid down not only in this stanza, but again in the beginning of Chapter V, as also in several other places (Gītā-Ra. p.425 and 436). As the Karma-Yoga is, in this way, proved to be superior, the Blessed Lord now advises Arjuna to follow that Path only—]

नियतं कुरु कर्म त्वं कर्म ज्यायो ह्यकर्मणः ।

शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिद्ध्येदकर्मणः ॥ 3.8 ॥

(3.8) Perform the Action which has been *niyata* (that is, prescribed), (according to your dharma); because, it is better to perform Action than not to perform Action; (see) besides, (that), if you do not perform Action, (you will not get even food to eat and) even the Body will not be maintained.

[By the words 'besides' and 'even' (cf.: "api ca") it has been shown that 'keeping alive the body (*śārīra-yātrā*) is a very secondary object. Now the Blessed Lord starts the subject of Sacrificial Ritual (*yajña-karma*) in order to show what Action is '*niyata*' that is, 'prescribed', and for what other important reasons that Action has to be performed. As the Śruti religion of sacrificial ritual has now become extinct, readers do not



now-a-days attach much importance to this subject But, as these Yajñas and Yāgas (that is,

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sacrificial ritual) were in full swing in the days of the Gītā , those were the things which were principally under-stood by the word 'Karma'; and it was, therefore, necessary to expound in the Gītā whether this religious ritual should be performed or not, and, if so, in what way. Besides, it must be borne in mind, that the word 'Yajña' does not mean only 'the Jyotiṣṭoma and other Yajñas prescribed by the Śrutis ' or, ' sacrificing something or other into the Fire (agni)', (Gī. 4.32). The word 'Yajña' embraces all Action, which was enjoined by Brahma-deva on all created beings, in accordance with the four different castes, after he had created the Cosmos, in order to achieve the smooth running of the Cosmos, that is to say, for 'lokasaṁgraha' (universal welfare), (Ma. Bhā. Anu. 48, 3; and Gī. Ra. pp.400 – 408); and these very rites have been described in our religious texts (dharma-śāstra), and are what are here meant by the word 'niyata' (prescribed rites). Therefore, though the sacrificial ritual of the Śrutis is now extinct, this exposition of the cycle of Yajñas cannot be said to be meaningless in these days. From the point of view of religion, all this ritual has been prescribed because, it is 'kāmya', that is, in order that man should thereby derive benefit and become happy. But in the second chapter above (Gī. 2.41 – 44) is

stated the doctrine that these purposeful or desire-prompted rites of the Mīmāṃsakas obstruct Release, that is to say, are inferior in worth. And here it is shown that it is necessary to perform that very ritual. Therefore, the Blessed Lord has explained in an exhaustive manner in the following stanzas how the good or evil contact or binding effect of these Actions can be made to disappear, and how the Naiṣkarmyāvasthā (state of Desireless Activity) is reached while performing Action; and all this is consistent with the Nārāyaṇīya or Bhāgavata religion described in the Bhārata.]

§§ यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।

तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर ॥ 3.9 ॥

(3.9) This world is bound by Action other than that which is performed for the Yajña; perform (even) the Action (to be

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performed) for it, (that is, for the Yajña), abandoning the Attachment or Hope of Fruit.

[ In the first half of this stanza is given the doctrine of the Mīmāṃsā school, and in the other half, the doctrine of the Gītā. The Mīmāṃsā school says that in as much as the ritual of Yajñas and Yāgas has been placed on everybody's shoulders by the Vedas themselves, and in as much as this cycle of Yajñas is necessary in order that the affairs of the world created by the

Īśvara should go on smoothly, nobody can give up Action (ritual); and that if he does so, he is to be looked upon as lost to the religion of the Śrutis. But it is a doctrine of the Law of Causality (karmavipāka-prakriyā) that, man has to suffer the consequences of each one of his acts; and according to this doctrine, it follows that man has to suffer the good or bad consequences of even the Action performed by him for the Yajña. To this the reply of the Mīmāṃsā school is that, in as much as the Vedas themselves have enjoined the performance of the 'Yajñas', and in as much as all Action which has to be done for the purpose of the Yajña must consequently be deemed to be acceptable to the Īśvara, such Action cannot be a source of bondage to the doer; but any other Action, performed for any purpose except for a Yajña, e. g., for one's own living, is an act not for the purpose of a Yajña, but merely for the benefit of oneself. Therefore, the Mīmāṃsā school refers to such Action as 'puruṣārtha-karma' (Action performed for oneself); and it has laid down that every person must suffer the consequences, good or evil, of all such Action, that is, of Action other than that performed for the purposes of a Yajña, or in other words, of Puruṣārtha-karma; and this is the proposition referred to in the first line of the above stanza (Gī. Ra. Ch. III, pp.72 to 75). The meaning, which some commentators arrive at, by taking 'Yajña' to mean 'Viṣṇu' (which is a secondary interpretation) so as to explain 'Yajñārtha' as meaning, 'for the sake of Viṣṇu', or 'in order to dedicate it to the Parameśvara', is, according to me, a

stretched and uncouth meaning. But here a question arises, namely: if a man

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does no other Action except what is necessary for the performance of a Yajña, does he escape the bondage of Action 1 For, Yajña is also an Action, and one cannot escape the fruit of it in the shape of obtaining heaven, mentioned in the Śāstras. And it has been clearly stated in Chapter II of the Gītā (GL 2. 40 – 44 and 9. 20, 21), that this Fruit in the shape of obtaining Heaven is obstructive to Release. Therefore, in the second part of the above stanza, it has been again emphasised that even the prescribed (niyata) ritual, which a man has to perform for the purposes of a Yajña, should be performed by him without entertaining the Hope of Fruit, that is to say, merely as a duty; and the same doctrine has been propounded later on when the 'sāttvika sacrifice' has been defined (Gī. 17.11 and 18.6). When in this way all Actions are performed for the purposes of a Yajña, and that too without entertaining the Hope of Fruit, (1) they cannot affect a person adversely in any other way, according to the Mīmāṃsā doctrine, because they have been performed for the purpose of a Yajña, and (2) one does not thereby obtain the Śāstric, yet non-permanent, Fruit in the shape of heaven, as they have been performed 'without entertaining the Hope of Fruit', but attains Release. Such is , ' the import of this stanza; and the same meaning has

been again emphasised later on in the 19th stanza, as also in the 23rd stanza of Chapter IV. In short, the doctrine of the Mīmāṃsā school that "one should perform Action for the purposes of the Yajña, as it has not a binding effect", has been amended and amplified by the Bhagavadgītā as: "even the Action to be performed for the purposes of the Yajña, should be performed without entertaining the Hope of Fruit". But even to this position an objection is raised, by asking whether it is not better, for obtaining Release by escaping the bond of Karma, that one should take Saṁnyāsa (renounce the world) and give up all ritual, rather than go through the useless effort of amending this doctrine of the Mīmāṃsā school, and keeping alive the duty of a householder to perform Yajñas and Yāgas. The clear answer of the Bhagavadgītā to this is in the negative;

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"because, but for the cycle of Yajñas, the affairs of the world will not go on. Nay; this cycle has been created by Brahmadeva in the beginning of the world in order to maintain the world; and in as much as the well-being or the welfare of the world is what is desired by the Blessed Lord, no one can escape the performance of this Yajña-ritual. And this very import is embodied in the next stanza. In reading this chapter, my readers must bear in mind that the word Yajña' has not been used in the narrow meaning of the Yajña prescribed by the Śrutis, but that it includes the Yajñas prescribed by the Smṛtis

as also all worldly Action prescribed for the four castes,  
according to their respective authority, j

सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः ।

अनेन प्रसविष्यध्वमेष वोऽस्त्विष्टकामधुक् ॥ 3.10 ॥

देवान्भावयतानेन ते देवा भावयन्तु वः ।

परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ॥ 3.11 ॥

इष्टान्भोगान्हि वो देवा दास्यन्ते यज्ञभाविताः ।

तैर्दत्तान्प्रदायैभ्यो यो भुङ्क्ते स्तेन एव सः ॥ 3.12 ॥

(3.10) In ancient days, Brahmadeva created living beings (prajā) together with the Yajña and said (to them): 'By-means of this (Yajña), may you grow; may this be to you a kāmādhenu (that is, something which fulfils all desires).

(3.11) By this Yajña, do you give pleasure (that is, prosperity) to the gods; (and) may those gods (in return) give you pleasure (that is, prosperity); pleasing each other (in this ay), may you (both) attain the highest śreya (that is, benefit);

(3.12) because, the gods, being satisfied by the Yajña, will give you (all) desired enjoyments. He who enjoys (by himself atone) what has been given by them, not giving it (back) to them, is indeed a thief.

[After Brahmadeva created this Universe that is, the world of the gods and all the other worlds, he was filled with anxiety as to how all these worlds would be maintained. He, therefore, performed austere religious practices for a thousand years;

and having thereby pleased the Blessed Lord, He (the Blessed Lord) created the Activistic cycle

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of Yajñas for the maintenance of all these worlds, and directed both the gods and the men to follow that arrangement and thereby protect each other: such is the description given in the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine mentioned in the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 340.38 to 63); and the same has been repeated in the above stanza, slightly differently and with minor verbal alterations. This fortifies the proposition that the doctrine enunciated in the Activistic Bhāgavata religion is propounded in the Gītā. But, as the Bhāgavata religion considered the slaughter of animals included in the Yajñas as objectionable (Ma Bhā. Śān. 336 and 337), Yajñas by sacrifice of wealth took the place of the sacrifice of animals; and ultimately, the opinion that the Yajña by means of prayer (japayajña), or by means of Knowledge (jñāna-yajña) was the most superior Yajña, came into vogue (Gī. 4.23 – 33). It is clear that the word 'Yajña' means, all the Action (duties) prescribed for the four castes; and that this Yajña-ritual or Yajña-cakra (cycle of Yajñas) has to be kept going without a hitch in the interests of the maintenance of society (Manu. 1.87). Nay, the 'Yajña-cakra' (cycle of Yajñas) mentioned later on in the 28th stanza is a kind of universal service (lokasaṁgraha), (See Gī. Ra. Ch. XI). It is, therefore, stated even in the Smṛtis that the Action

productive of universal welfare, which the Blessed Lord thus created in the beginning of the world for the welfare both of the world of men and of the world of gods, should necessarily be kept going; and the same meaning has been made perfectly clear in the next stanza.]

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः ।

भुञ्जते ते त्वघं पापा ये पचन्त्यात्मकारणात् ॥ 3.13 ॥

(3.13) Those good men, who partake of what remains after the-performance of the Yajña, are redeemed from all sin. But those, who (without performing the Yajña) cook (food) for themselves (only), such sinful persons eat only sin.

[ In the Ṛg-Veda hymn 10.117.6, the same meaning is conveyed; and it is stated that: "nāryamaṇaṁ puṣyati no sakhyāyaṁ kevalāgho bhavati kevalādi", that is, "he who does

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not feed the 'aryamā', that is, the friend, but eats alone, should be looked upon as a sinner". Similarly, there are to be found such stanzas in the Manu-Smṛti, as: "aghaṁ sa kevalaṁ bhuñkte yah pacatyātmakāraṇat I yajñaśiṣṭāśinaṁ hy etat satām annaṁ vidhīyate" II (3. 118), that is, "He who cooks {food} only for himself, eats only sin; what remains over after the performance of the Yajña is called amṛta and what remains



over after everybody else has eaten (bhukta-śeṣa) is called vidhas" (Manu. 3.285); and that food alone is the proper food for respectable people (see, Gī. 4.31). The Blessed Lord now gives a more detailed explanation of how the Yajña is necessary for the maintenance of the world, or how the world depends on the performance of Yajñas, instead of the Yajña and other ritual being merely for the purpose of burning rice and sesamum into the fire, or merely for the purpose of obtaining heaven –]

अन्नाद्भवन्ति भूतानि पर्जन्यादन्नसम्भवः ।

यज्ञाद्भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः ॥ 3.14 ॥

(3.14) Living beings come into existence from food; food results from rain; rain results from the Yajña; and the Yajña results from Karma (that is, ritual ~Translator.).

[ Even the Manu-Smṛti describes the origin of man, and of the food necessary for his sustenance, in the same way. The stanza in the Manu-Smṛti is: "the oblation made into the Fire in a Yajña reaches the Sun, and then rain results from the Sun, that is, ultimately from the Yajña; food results from the rain, and life, from food" (Manu. 3.76); and the same stanza appears in the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 262.11). In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad (2. 1), this evolution is taken even further back, and the order of evolution is given as: "from the Paramātmā was first born ether; and afterwards, air, fire, water, and earth came into existence, one after the other; and from the earth spring the vegetables, and from the vegetables, man".

Therefore, the Blessed Lord, consistently, with that order of creation, takes the evolution of created 'beings, which, in the last stanza has been brought as far as Karma, still further back to

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Prakṛti (Nature or Matter), and behind Prakṛti, right upto the Imperishable (akṣara) Brahman— ]

कर्म ब्रह्मोद्भवं विद्धि ब्रह्माक्षरसमुद्भवम् ।

तस्मात्सर्वगतं ब्रह्म नित्यं यज्ञे प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥ 3.15 ॥

(3.15) Know (that) the origin of Action (is) from the Brahman (that is, from Prakṛti', and this Brahman has sprung out of the akṣara [1] (that is to say, from the Parameśvara); therefore, (know that) the All-pervading Brahman is always 'primarily worshipped' (adhiṣṭhita ~Translator.) in the Yajña.

[Some commentators interpret the word 'Brahman' in this stanza, not as Prakṛti, but as Veda. Although this interpretation would be correct in the meaning that "the Brahman, that is, the Vedas, originate from the Parameśvara", yet, the words "the All-pervading Brahman is in the Yajña", do not become intelligible according to that interpretation. Therefore, the meaning of the word 'Brahman', given in the Rāmānujabhāṣya, consistently with its meaning in the stanza, "mama yonir

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[1] 'akṣara', means 'the Imperishable' ~Translator.

mahat brahma" Gī. 14.3), (where it means Prakṛti), namely, 'Prakṛti, which is the Fundamental Substance of the world' appeals to me as better. Besides, the description, "anuyajñam jagat sarvaṁ yajñas cānujagat sadā", that is, "the Yajña is followed by the world, and the world is followed by the Yajña", which appears in the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata, where the chapter of Yajñas is going on (Śān. 267.34), also becomes consistent with the present stanza, if the word is taken to mean Prakṛti. For, I have explained at considerable length in Chapters VII and VIII of the Gītā-Rahasya, that the world is nothing but Prakṛti, as also how Prakṛti springs from the Parameśvara, and how the entire activity of the world springs from the three-constituted Prakṛti. Besides, there is a description even in the Puruṣa-sūkta that the Gods created the world by first performing a Yajña.]

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एवं प्रवर्तितं चक्रं नानुवर्तयतीह यः ।

अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति ॥ 3.16 ॥

(3.16) The life of that man who does not move the cycle; (that is, the cycle (cakra), whether of Action, or of sacrificial ritual), which has thus been started (for the maintenance of the world), is sinful; and the existence, O Pārtha! of this slave of the senses (that is, of the person, who enjoys all by himself, without giving anything to the gods) is worthless.

[ It has thus been proved that sacrificial Action, or the respective duties of the four castes, have been created by Brahmadeva – and not by man – and that these duties are necessary both for keeping the world going on (stanza 14), as also for maintaining oneself (stanza 8); and that, therefore, the Cycle of Sacrifice (yajña-cakra) has got to be continually kept going on in this world, unattachedly, That is to say, I have shown how the Karma-kāṇḍa in the Mīmāṃsā philosophy, or in the 'trayī dharma' has been left untouched in the Gītā-religion by the device of the Unattached Reason (See Gītā-Rahasya, Ch. XI, pp.478 to 482). But some commentators belonging to the School of Renunciation take exception to this by saying that, as the Self-Knower (ātma-jñānin) obtains Release in this world, and as he has already acquired here all that is to be acquired, it is not necessary for him to perform any Action whatsoever in the world, nor should he perform Action. Therefore, the Blessed Lord now gives in the three following stanzas the answer of the Gītā to that objection –]

॥ यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।

आत्मन्येव च सन्तुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥ 3.17 ॥

नैव तस्य कृतेनार्थो नाकृतेनेह कश्चन ।

न चास्य सर्वभूतेषु कश्चिदर्थव्यपाश्रयः ॥ 3.18 ॥

(3.17) But, for the man who is merged only in the Ātman, content in the Ātman, and pleased with the Ātman, nothing (as of his own) remains (in balance).

(3.18) Similarly, here (that is, in this world) he has nothing to gain whether by doing or by not doing (any particular thing); and there is

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no purpose (as of his own) which, is mixed up with all created beings;

तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।

असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ॥ 3.19 ॥

(3.19) tasmāt, (that is, because the Jñānin does not in .this way set store by anything in this world), you too do not have any Attachment (to the Fruit), but perform (your) duty; because, the man who performs Action, having given up Attachment, attains the highest (state).

[As commentators have very much distorted the meaning of these three stanzas (17 to 19), I -will first explain their plain meaning. These three stanzas form really speaking only one sentence, in the shape of a reason and an inference. Out of these, the 17th and 18th stanzas first show the reasons generally given for the Jñānin not performing Action; and the inference drawn by the Gītā is stated in the 19th stanza, which starts with the word 'tasmāt' (that is, ' therefore '), which shows the inference. It has been clearly stated in the 4th and 5th stanzas in the beginning of this chapter, that the Actions of

sleeping, sitting, getting up, nay, of existing itself etc., cannot be given up in this world, even if one wants to do so; and that, therefore, 'naiṣkarmya' is not achieved by giving up Action, nor is such Renunciation of Action any means for attaining Perfection (siddhi). But the argument advanced against this point of view by the School of Renunciation is: "It is not that we give up Action in order to obtain Perfection. Whatever anybody does in this world, he does it either for his own gain or for the gain of another. But the highest ideal of every man, namely, the Siddhāvasthā. (State of Perfection), or Mokṣa (Release), is attained by a Jñānin as a result of Knowledge; and therefore, as there does not remain anymore anything else, which he has to acquire (stanza 17), it is all the same to him. whether he performs a particular Action or does not perform it. Very well, if it is said that he must perform such Action for the benefit of other people, then he has nothing to do with other people (stanza 18). Then, why should he perform

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in the same words as the Gītā ; and it is stated in the second line that, "why should I insist on not performing Action? I am performing whatever befalls me according to the Śāstras". Also, a little higher up, the Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha has borrowed verbatim from the Gītā the stanza: "naiva tasya kṛtenārtho" etc., and in the next stanza, it says: "yad yathā nāma sampannam tat tathāstv itareṇa kim", that is, "therefore, (the

jīvan-mukta) performs whatever befalls him, and does not pay attention to anything else". (Yo. 6 U. 125.49, 50). Not only in the Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha, but also in the Gaṇeśagītā, where the same meaning is to be conveyed, the stanza is:

kiṁcid asya na sādhyam syāt sarvajantuṣu sarvadā ।  
ato 'saktatayā bhūpa kartavyam karma jantubhiḥ ॥  
(Gaṇeśagītā 2.18),

that is, "there is nothing left for him to earn from other living beings; for this reason (ataḥ), O Raja! everybody has to perform his duties with an unattached Reason!" From this it will be clear that the mutual relation between the three stanzas as showing respectively the reason and the inference, as stated by me, is correct. As the Yoga-Vāśiṣṭha gives in one stanza what is shown in three-stanzas in the Gītā, there remains no room for doubting the relation of reason and inference in that stanza. This line of reasoning of the Gītā has been later on adopted by the Buddhist writers of the Mahāyāna sect (Gī. Ra. pp.798 and 816). The Blessed Lord now gives an illustration for emphasising the statement made above that, there no more remains any self-interest for the person who has attained Knowledge; that, he must perform his duties with a desireless Reason; and that, Desireless Action 'of this kind ends in Release, instead of obstructing it –]

§§ कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।

लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपश्यन्कर्तुमर्हसि ॥ 3.20 ॥

(3.20) Janaka and others thus attained Release by performing Action. In the same way, it is proper that you should perform, Action, keeping an eye to universal welfare.

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[ The first part of this stanza contains an illustration of how Release is attained by means of Desireless Action; and a different subject-matter has been started from the second part of this stanza. It has been proved that although a Jñānin has nothing to do -with other people, yet, as such a person cannot escape the performance of Action, he must perform Action desirelessly. Although the argument that, 'since one cannot escape the performance of Action, one must perform it ', may be perfectly logical, yet, it does not satisfy ordinary persons as much as it should. They are afraid in their minds that Action is to be performed merely because it is unavoidable, and that nothing else is to be gained thereby. Therefore, the Blessed Lord starts the second part of the stanza in order to show that securing universal welfare by one's Action is a real ideal to be reached in this world by the Jñānin. This is the reason for the words 'evāpi' in the phrase 'lokasaṁgraham evāpi'; and these words clearly show that a different subject has now been commenced. The word 'loka' in the phrase 'lokasaṁgraha' has a comprehensive meaning, and includes the putting, not only mankind, but the entire world, on a proper path, and making a 'saṁgraha' of it, that is, maintaining, feeding, protecting, and



defending it in a proper way, without allowing it to be destroyed. As these and other matters have been dealt with by me in an exhaustive manner, in Chapter XI of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.455 to 467), I shall not deal with them again here. The Blessed Lord now first explains why this duty or right of achieving 'lokasaṁgraha' (universal welfare) falls to the lot of the Jñānin –]

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः ।

स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते ॥ 3.21 ॥

(3.21) Ordinary people do what is done by the Exalted (that is, by the Self-Realised Karma-Yogin). That thing which is accepted by him as correct is followed by people.

[ The Taittirīya Upaniṣad, after first giving the advice, 'satyaṁ vada' (speak the truth), 'dharmaṁ cara' (act righteously) says: "if you are in doubt how to act in any

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particular contingency of life, act as the knowing, Yoga-practising, religious Brahmin acts in that matter" (Tai. 1.11.4); and a stanza to the same effect also appears in the Nārāyaṇīya-dharma (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 341. 25). The Marathi stanza of Śrī Samarthā, 'jasā vartato lokakalyāṇakārī । jagīm vartatī sarvahī tyā prakārīm", (that is, "as the public benefactor acts, so also do all act in the world" ~Translator.), is nothing

but a translation of this stanza. This 'loka-kalyāṇakārī' person (i.e., 'public benefactor' ~Translator.) of Śrī Samarth is the 'śreṣṭha' Karma-Yogin of the Gītā. The word 'śreṣṭha' does not mean a Self-Realised Ascetic (ātmā-jñānin samnyāsīn), (See Gī. 5.2). The Blessed Lord now points to Himself as an illustration, for further emphasising the proposition that although a Self - Realised person may have got over his selfishness, he does not escape the performance of Actions for public welfare –]

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किञ्चन ।

नान्वासमवासव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥ 3.22 ॥

यदि ह्यहं न वर्तेयं जातु कर्मण्यतन्द्रितः ।

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ 3.23 ॥

उत्सीदेयुरिमे लोका न कुर्या कर्म चेदहम् ।

संकरस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः ॥ 3.24 ॥

(3.22) O Partial (see this that,) there is left no duty (of mine) in the three worlds for Me; nor is there any not. acquired (thing left) to acquire; yet, I am performing Action;

(3.23) because, if I, giving up idleness, do not take part in Action, then, O Pārtha! all men will follow in all respects the path followed by Me.

(3.24) If I do not perform Action, these worlds will become utsanna (that is, extinct); I shall be the cause of saṅkara (that is, caste-confusion ~Translator.) j and these created beings will be destroyed by my hands.

[The Blessed Lord has made clear in this stanza in a very nice way that 'lokasaṁgraha' (universal welfare) is not some humbug. So also does the illustration of Himself given by the Blessed Lord fully bear out the interpretation put by me on stanzas 17 to 19 above, namely, that,

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though, no duty remains to be performed for the Jñānin (for himself), after he has acquired Knowledge, yet, he must perform all Action desirelessly. Nay, otherwise this illustration will be out of place and meaningless (See Gī. Ra. pp.446 – 7). The important difference between the Sāṁkhya path and the Karma-Yoga path is that the Jñānins following the Sāṁkhya path do not attach the slightest importance to what will become of the world if the cycle of Yajñas come to an end, and they give up all Action, whereas the Jñānins following the Karma-Yoga path keep performing all their various Actions, according to their respective religion (dharma), for the purpose of universal welfare (lokasaṁgraha), looking upon it as an objective of the utmost importance and necessity, and though they may not need to perform such Actions for their own benefit. (See Gītā Rahasya, Chapter XI, p.491). The Blessed Lord has thus told Arjuna what He Himself does. HE now shows in the following stanzas the difference between the Actions of the Jñānin (scient) and the Ajñānin (ignorant), and

explains what a Jñānin has to do in order to reform the Ajñānin  
–]

§§ सत्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत ।

कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथासक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसंग्रहम् ॥ 3.25 ॥

न बुद्धिभेदं जनयेदज्ञानां कर्मसङ्गिनाम् ।

जोषयेत्सर्वकर्माणि विद्वान्युक्तः समाचरन् ॥ 3.26 ॥

(3.25) O Arjuna! (therefore) the Jñānin who desires to achieve universal welfare must behave in the same way as Ajñānins, who are attached to (worldly) Action, but having given up Attachment.

(3.26) The Jñānin should not unsettle the buddhi (that is, Faith ~Translator.) of Ajñānins attached to Action, but should (himself) become yukta (that is, yoga-yukta), and a performer of all Actions, and make others perform them willingly.

[This stanza means that one should not unsettle the faith, or conviction of the Ajñānins (ignorant), and the same direction is again given in the 29th stanza. But, this does not mean that people are to be kept in ignorance. In the

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25th stanza, it has been stated that the Jñānin must achieve universal welfare (lokasaṁgraha); and 'universal welfare' means enlightening people. But to this an objection may-be

raised that though 'lokasaṁgraha' may be a duty, yet, it is not necessary on that account that a Jñānin should personally perform Action; and it will be quite enough if he imparts wisdom to people. To this objection, the Blessed Lord replies that: 'if knowledge is merely orally imparted to those persons, who have not got into the firm habit of righteous Action, (and ordinary people belong to this category), we see that they make use of that Knowledge of the Brahman for supporting their own misdeeds; and they talk nonsense, saying, "such and such a Jñānin says so" '. Besides, if a Jñānin absolutely gives up all Action, that becomes an illustration for the Ajñānin to become idle. "When people thus become wicked in thought, or mischievous, or idlers, a 'buddhi-bheda' is said to have taken place; and it is not proper that a Jñānin should in this way unsettle (make a bheda of) the conviction (buddhi) of other people. Therefore, the Gītā has laid down the important doctrine that, it is an important duty of a man who has become a Jñānin, to remain himself in worldly life, for the purpose of 'lokasaṁgraha', that is, in order to make people wise, and put them on the righteous path, and thus to give a living example to others of performing righteous, that is, Desireless Action, and make them act righteously. (See Gītā-Rahasya pp.561 – 2). But some commentators disregard this import of the Gītā, and put a perverse interpretation on this stanza to mean: "the Jñānin should hypocritically perform the same acts which are performed by the Ajñānins, in order that the Ajñānins should remain Ajñānins, and perform Actions "!

As if the Gītā has been written in order to teach people hypocrisy, and in order to keep people in ignorance and make them perform Actions like beasts! Those persons, who firmly believe that Jñānins should not perform Action will naturally look upon 'lokasaṁgraha' as hypocritical. But, that is not the true message of the Gītā. The Blessed Lord says that 'lokasaṁgraha' is one of the important duties of a Jñānin, and that; a Jñānin must perform Action

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not for keeping people in ignorance, but in order to place before them an excellent example, and to thereby improve them, (See Gītā-Rahasya, Chapters XI and XII). To proceed further; there is the likelihood of a doubt that if a Self-Realised Jñānin begins to -do all worldly Actions in this way for universal welfare, he too will become an Ajñānin. Therefore, the Blessed Lord now shows the difference between the conduct of a Jñānin and an Ajñānin, though both may take part in worldly life, as also what the Ajñānin has to learn from the Jñānin –]

प्रकृतेः क्रियमाणानि गुणैः कर्माणि सर्वशः ।

अहंकारविमूढात्मा कर्ताहमिति मन्यते ॥ 3.27 ॥

तत्त्ववित्तु महाबाहो गुणकर्मविभागयोः ।

गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्त इति मत्वा न सज्जते ॥ 3.28 ॥

प्रकृतेर्गुणसंमूढाः सज्जन्ते गुणकर्मसु ।

तानकृत्स्नविदो मन्दान्कृत्स्नविन्न विचालयेत् ॥ 3.29 ॥

(3.27) Though all Actions take place a result of the constituents (sattva, rajas, and tamas) of Prakṛti, the (Ajñānin person) befooled by egoism looks upon himself as the doer.

(3.28) But, O mighty-armed Arjuna! he (the Jñānin), who realises the principle that, the constituents, as also Actions, are both different, from himself, 'and that all this is nothing but the mutual inter-play of the constituents, does not become' attached to it.

(3.29) People befooled by the constituents of Prakṛti become attached to the constituents and to Actions; such non-scient and dull-minded people should not be spoiled' by the Jñānins (by putting them on a wrong path by abandoning Action themselves).

[This stanza repeats the exposition made in the 26th stanza. The propositions laid down in the above stanzas, namely: Prakṛti and the Ātman are different from each other; Prakṛti or Māyā does everything, the Ātman does nothing; and he, who has Realised this, is the true 'buddha' or 'jñānin' etc., form part of the Kapila-Sāṃkhya philosophy; and the reader is referred to -the .exhaustive exposition of this subject made in the seventh chapter of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.222 to 226). Many persons interpret the 28th stanza as

meaning that the 'guṇaḥ', that is, the 'senses', rove about in the 'guṇaḥ' that is, the 'objects of the senses'. This interpretation is not incorrect; because, the eleven organs of sense and the five 'objects of the senses' (that is, viṣaya), such as, 'śabda' (sound), 'sparśa' (touch) etc. form part of the 23 qualities of the original Prakṛti according to Sāṃkhya philosophy; but I think that, the statement, "guṇa guṇeṣu varānte", has been. made with reference to all the twenty-four qualities (Gī. 13.19 – 22; and 14.23). I have translated those words literally and in an exhaustive way. And saying that, although the Jñānin and the Ajñānin may both perform the same act, . yet, there is a great difference between them from the point of view of Reason (See Gītā-Rahasya, pp.430 and 450), the Blessed Lord now advises as follows, by way of summarising all this exposition –]

§§ मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।

निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥ 3.30 ॥

(3.30) (For this reason, O Arjuna!) making a 'saṁnyāsa' (that is, dedication) of all Actions to Me ' with a mind fixed, on the Highest Self (that is, with an adhyātmabuddhi ~Translator.), and giving up Hope (for the Fruit) as also Mine-ness, fight, without any mental perturbation.

[ The Blessed Lord now explains the result of acting according to this advice and of not so acting –]

§§ ये मे मतमिदं नित्यमनुतिष्ठन्ति मानवाः ।



श्रद्धावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः ॥ 3.31 ॥

ये त्वेतदभ्यसूयन्तो नानुतिष्ठन्ति मे मतम् ।

सर्वज्ञानविमूढांस्तान्विद्धि नष्टानचेतसः ॥ 3.32 ॥

(3.31) Those devout (persons), who always act according to this advice of Mine, without finding fault with it, they too become free from Karma, (that is, from the bonds of Karma).

(3.32) But, know that those, who do not act according to this My teaching, finding fault with it with a fault-finding vision, such 'sarvajñāna-vimūḍha' (that is, utter fools), thoughtless persons, are utterly ruined.

[The description of the consequences of following or not following Karma-Yoga, given above to prove that the

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Karma-Yoga, which prescribes Desireless Action, is the best, clearly shows what, the doctrine propounded by the Gītā is. In order to supplement this disquisition on the Karma-Yoga, the Blessed Lord now describes the strength of Prakṛti (inherent nature), and the control of the senses necessary for resisting that power – ]

§§ सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।

प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥ 3.33 ॥

इन्द्रियस्येन्द्रियस्यार्थे रागद्वेषौ व्यवस्थितौ ।

तयोर्न वशमागच्छेत्तौ ह्यस्य परिपन्थिनौ ॥ 3.34 ॥

(3.33) Even the Jñānin acts according to the natural tendency of his Prakṛti; all created beings act according to the inclination of (their respective) Prakṛtis; (in these circumstances) what can restraint (that is, pressure) do?

(3.34) The liking and repulsion between the senses and the objects of sense (such as, sound, touch, etc.) are both vyavasthita (that is, fundamentally fixed). One should not become subject to this affection and repulsion, because, they are the (highway-robbing) enemies of men.

[ The word 'nigraha' in the 33rd stanza does not mean mere 'control', but means 'coercion', or 'insistence'. The Gītā favours the proper control of the senses. What is meant here is that it is not possible to totally destroy the natural tendencies of the senses by self-coercion or persistence. For instance, so long as the body exists, a man leaves his home to go and beg when he is hungry, however much he may be a Jñānin or wise, because hunger, thirst, etc. are natural tendencies. Therefore, this stanza means that the duty of a wise man lies, not in uselessly determining to totally kill the senses by force, but in keeping them within his control by 'saṁyamana' (concentration), and turning his natural tendencies to universal welfare. Similarly, it is quite clear from the word 'vyavasthita' in the 34th stanza that pain and happiness are two independent emotions, and that the one is

not the absence of the other" (Gī. Ra. Ch. IV pp.136 and 182).  
In the incessant activity of Prakṛti, that is, of the

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creation, it very often happens that we have to do things, which we do not want to do (Gī. 18.39). It is impossible for us to refuse to perform them. On these occasions, the Jñānin performs these acts with a desireless frame of mind and purely as a matter of duty, and remains untouched by the sin or the merit of the Action, whereas, the Ajñānin becomes Attached to these things and thereby suffers pain. This is the great difference between the two from the point of Reason, as has been stated by the poet Bhāsa. But now the following difficulty arises: even taking it for granted that one should not forcibly kill the senses, nor give up Action, but should perform all Actions with an unattached Reason, yet, is it not more proper for the Jñānin to take to agriculture, commerce, mendicancy, or other similar mild and harmless Action, rather than to terrible and destructive acts like warfare? To this the Blessed Lord replies as follows – ]

§§ श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥ 3.35 ॥

(3.35) Even if it may be easier to follow the religion of another, yet, one's own religion (that is, according to the religion of the

four castes) is more meritorious, though it might be 'viguṇa' (that is, full of faults); though death results (while acting) according to one's own religion, there is bliss in that; (but) the religion of another is risky!

[One's own religion' means the 'code of duties prescribed for everyone by the Śāstras according to the arrangement of the four castes laid down by the writers of the Smṛtis'; it does not mean the science of Release (mokṣa-dharma). As the arrangement of the four castes, made by the writers of the Śāstras by allocating activities consistently with the special qualities of each, is for the benefit of everybody {Gī. 18.41}, the welfare of Brahmins and Kṣatriyas and the welfare of the entire society, lies in their respectively performing their own duties, notwithstanding that they become Jñānins (sages); and it is not proper for them to meddle with that arrangement every now and then. This is what the Blessed Lord says (Gī. Ra. pp.464 and 697).

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There is a Gujarati proverb in vogue which has the same meaning namely, "jenūṁ kāma tenāthī thāya I bijo kare to gothām khāya". Anybody will admit that, even where the four-caste arrangement is not in vogue, it is in the best interests of everybody, that the man who has spent the whole of his life in the army should, when the occasion arises, do the business of

a fighting-soldier, rather than that of a tailor; and the same argument applies to the four-caste arrangement. The question whether the four-caste arrangement is good or bad, is a different question altogether, and does not arise here. It is an unquestionable fact that other forms of activity are as necessary for the proper maintenance and protection of society as agriculture or other similarly harmless and gentle occupations. This stanza means that whatever occupation one may have once adopted, whether according to the four-caste arrangement, or of one's own free will, it becomes one's 'religion', and it is not proper to find fault with it when occasion arises and to forsake one's duty; and if necessary, one must die in the performance of one's own duty in life.

Whatever occupation is considered, some fault or other can certainly be found with it (Gī. 18.48). But it is not proper that one should, on that account, give up one's prescribed (niyata) duty. This very principle has been enunciated in the Brahmana-Hunter dialogue and Tulādhāra-Jājali dialogue in the Mahābhārata; and the first half of the 35th stanza is to be found in the Manu-Smṛti (Manu. 10.97), and also later on again in the Gītā (18.47). With reference to the statement, "one cannot carry out one's determination to kill the senses" in the 33rd stanza, Arjuna. "now asks why that should be so, and why a man is pulled towards evil deeds, against his will.]

अर्जुन उवाच

§§ अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः ।

अनिच्छन्नपि वाष्णेय बलादिव नियोजितः ॥ 3.36 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(3.36) Vārṣṇeya! (that is, Śrī Kṛṣṇa) now tell me by what inspiration. does a man commit sin, not

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himself desiring it, as though coerced?

श्रीभगवानुवाच

काम एष क्रोध एष रजोगुणसमुद्भवः ।

महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् ॥ 3.37 ॥

धूमेनाव्रियते वह्निर्यथादर्शो मलेन च ।

यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥ 3.38 ॥

आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा ।

कामरूपेण कौन्तेय दुष्पूरेणानलेन च ॥ 3.39 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(3.37) Know that in this matter, the enemy is that Desire, which is most greedy and most sinful, born out of the rajas constituent, and that Anger;

(3.38) just as fire is covered by smoke, or a mirror by dust, or as the embryo is enveloped by the amnion, so has everything been enveloped by it;

(3.39) O Kaunteya! that which is an insatiable fire, that constant enemy of Jñānins in the shape of Desire, has enveloped all Knowledge.

[ This is a repetition of the statement of Manu that:—

na jātu kāmaḥ kāmānām upabhogena śāmyati ।

haviṣā kṛṣṇavartmeva bhūya evābhivardhate ॥

(Manu. 2. 94); that is, "Desire is never satisfied by the enjoyment of the objects of Desire; it grows more and more as does the fire to which fuel is added " (See Gī. Ra. Ch. V, p.143) ].

इन्द्रियाणि मनो बुद्धिरस्याधिष्ठानमुच्यते ।

एतैर्विमोहयत्येष ज्ञानमावृत्य देहिनम् ॥ 3.40 ॥

तस्मात्त्वमिन्द्रियाण्यादौ नियम्य भरतर्षभ ।

पाप्मानं प्रजहि ह्येनं ज्ञानविज्ञाननाशनम् ॥ 3.41 ॥

(3.40) The Senses, the Mind and the Reason are said to be the adhiṣṭhāna (that is, the house, or fortress) of it; by the support of these, it puts aside Knowledge and throws the man into confusion.

(3.41) Therefore, O most excellent Bhārata! first control the senses and destroy this sinner, who is the destroyer of Jñāna (Spiritual Knowledge) and Vijñāna (specified Knowledge). "

§§ इन्द्रियाणि पराण्याहुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः ।

मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः ॥ 3.42 ॥

एवं बुद्धेः परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना ।

जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ॥ 3.43 ॥

(3.42) It is said that the senses (which know material external objects as they experience them) are 'para' (that is, beyond); the Mind is beyond the senses, the vyavasāyātmikā (that is, discerning ~Translator.) Reason is beyond the Mind; and It (the Ātman) is beyond the Reason.

(3.43) O Mighty-armed Arjuna! thus Realising that, which is beyond the Reason, and controlling yourself by yourself, destroy this enemy, which is difficult to conquer, in the shape of Desire.

[In order that a person should be able to perform all Actions according to his own religion, and for universal welfare, having got rid of Attachment (āśakti) in the shape of Desire, one must have perfect control over his senses: and that is the only control over the senses, which is meant here. The Gītā does not say that one should forcibly kill -the senses, and give up all Action (see Gī. Ra. Ch. V, p.153). The stanza "indriyāṇi parāṇyāhuḥ etc." above (3.42) is from -the Kaṭhopanīṣad, and I have shown in the Gītā-Rahasya that four or five other stanzas have been taken into the Gītā (see Appendix p.741) from the Kaṭhopanīṣad. The purpose of the senses is to collect the



impressions of the external world; and after the Mind has co-ordinated them, the Reason distinguishes between them; and the Ātman (Self) is beyond all these, and different from all these. This is, in short, the summary of the Science of the Body .and the Ātman (See the exhaustive consideration of this subject-matter at the end of Chapter VI of the Gītā-Rahasya pp.179 to 201). As I have exhaustively considered in the tenth chapter of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.383 to 395) the moot questions relating to the doctrine of Causality (karma-vipāka), such as, how a man is incited to a particular act as a result of the emotions of Desire, Anger etc., notwithstanding that he may not wish to perform it, or how a man finds out a way even out of this

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situation by means of sense-control, as lie has Freedom of Will, I shall not take up space by repeating the same subject-matter here. The question of the. control of the senses has been considered later in Chapter VI of the Gītā]

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे कर्मयोगो नाम तृतीयोऽध्यायः ॥ ३ ॥

Thus ends the third chapter, entitled Karma-Yoga in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga included in

the Science of the Brahman (that is, on the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung (that is told) by the Blessed Lord.

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# CHAPTER IV – JñĀNA-KARMA-SAMNYĀSA YOGA.

चतुर्थोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER IV.

[ This chapter further emphasises the -principles of Karma-Yoga which have been explained so far, namely, (i) as nobody can escape Karma (Action), Action must be performed, though the Reason may have become desireless; (ii) ' Karma' means, such karma as Yajñas and Yāgas etc.; (iii) but, as this Karma (ritual) of the Mīmāṃsā school is productive of heaven, and consequently to a certain extent binding, it must be performed having given up Attachment (āśakti); (iv) even though selfishness disappears as a result of Knowledge, Action does not cease to be necessary; and, therefore, even a Jñānin must perform Desireless Action, as such Action is essential in the interests of universal welfare. In order that Arjuna should not suspect that this course of conduct, or Niṣṭhā was something new, which had been prescribed for him, the Blessed Lord now first explains. the ancient tradition of this teaching which has been handed down from preceptor to disciple.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

§§ इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययम् ।

विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥ 4.1 ॥

एवं परम्पराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः ।

स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परन्तप ॥ 4.2 ॥

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः ।

भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् ॥ 4.3 ॥

(4.1) I expounded this avyaya (that is, inexhaustible, or which is not touched by past, present, or future, and is permanent) (Karma-) Yoga to Vivasvat (that is, the Sun); Vivasvat expounded it to (his son) Manu , and Manu expounded it to (his son) Ikṣvāku.

(4.2) This Yoga, come into existence by this tradition, came to be known to the Royal Sages; but, O Śātrutūpana! (Arjuna), after the lapse of considerable time, it ceased to exist on this world.

(4.3) That same ancient Yoga (Karma-Yoga-mārga) has been

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expounded by Me to you to-day, as being the most supreme mystery (of all mysteries), because you are My disciple, and are beloved of Me.

[ I have proved in Chapter III of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.76 – 88) that the single word 'Yoga' used in these three stanzas has been used in the meaning of 'Karma-Yoga', that is, ' the method of performing Action with an Equable Reason ', out of the two paths of life, namely, the Sāṁkhya and the Yoga. Although the tradition of this path of life -which has been stated in these stanzas is of the utmost importance for understanding its origin, commentators do not seem to have paid much attention to the matter. In the description of the Bhāgavata religion given in the Nārāyaṇīya Upākhyāna of the Mahābhārata, Vaiśampāyana says to Janamejaya that in the Śvetadvīpa, this religion was, from the Blessed Lord,

nāradena tu samprāptaḥ sarahasyaḥ asaṁgrahaḥ ।  
eṣa dharmo jagannāthāt sākṣān nārāyaṇaṁ nṛpa ॥  
evameṣa mahān dharmah sa te pūrvam nṛpottama ।  
kathito harigītāsu samāsavidhikalpitaḥ ॥ (Ma. Bhā.  
Śān. 346.9, 10)

that is, "acquired by Nārada; and O Raja! the same illustrious religion has been imparted to you in the Hari-Gītā, that is, in the Bhagavadgītā, together with the briefly stated ritual (samāsavidhikalpitaḥ)". Later on, it is again stated (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 348. 8) that, "this religion was expounded to Arjuna, who had become despondent in the war". This clearly shows that the Karma-Yoga in the Gītā has arisen out of the Bhāgavata doctrine (Gī. Ra. pp.12 to 16). The tradition of this doctrine from the beginning of the universe has not been given in the

Gītā out of fear of its taking up too much space; and reference has been made , only to Vivasvān, Manu, and Ikṣvāku; but the real meaning of this statement becomes clear when one considers the entire tradition of the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine. Brahmadeva had seven lives. After the description of the tradition of the Nārāyaṇīya religion given in the first six of these lives is over, Vaisampayana has again said to Janamejaya in

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the course of the further description of the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine as follows:— When the Kṛta-Yuga of the seventh, that is to say, the present life of Brahmadeva was over,

tretāyugādaṁ ca tato vivasvān manave dadau ।  
manuś ca lokabhṛtiyartham sutāyekṣvākave dadau ॥  
ikṣvākuṇā ca kathito vyāpya lokān avasthitāḥ ।  
gamiṣyati kṣīyante ca punar nārāyaṇam ṛpa ।  
yatīnām cāpi yo dharmah sa te pūrvam ṛpottama ।  
kathito harigītāsu samāsavidhikalpitaḥ ॥

that is, "this doctrine was propounded by Vivasvān to Manu in the beginning of the Tretā-yuga; Manu gave it to his son Ikṣvāku for universal welfare, and Ikṣvāku then propounded it to the world; O Raja: when the world has been destroyed, (this

doctrine) will go back to Narayana. This doctrine, and side by side with it, "yatīnām cāpi", that is, 'the Saṁnyāsa doctrine also', has been explained to you before in the Bhagavad-Gītā" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 348. 51 – 53). From this, it becomes clear, that the tradition of the Bhāgavata doctrine given here relates only to the Tretāyuga, which came before the Dvāpara-yuga at the end of which the Bhāratiya war took place; and that more has not been described out of fear for the amount of space which the description would take up. This Bhāgavata doctrine is nothing else but 'Yoga' or 'Karma-Yoga'; and this tradition of the Karma-Yoga having been propounded to Manu, appears not only in the Gītā, but has also been referred to in the Bhāgavata-purāṇa (Bhāg. 8.24.55); and the importance of the Karma-Yoga propounded to Manu has also been described in the 52nd chapter of the Matsyapurāṇa. But the subject-matter stated in any of these places is not as exhaustive and complete as in the Nārāyaṇīya Upākhyāna. When one realises that the tradition of 'Vivasvān to Manu to Ikṣvāku' does not at all apply to the Sāṁkhya doctrine; and that no third Niṣṭhā in addition to the Sāṁkhya and the Yoga doctrines has been propounded in the Gītā, the fact that this tradition is of the Karma-Yoga comes to be proved in a second way (Gī. 2.39). But, although the tradition of the Sāṁkhya and the Yoga doctrines may not

be the same, yet, as the exposition of the Sāṃkhya or Saṃnyāsa doctrine is incidentally included in the exposition of Karma-Yoga (Gī. Ra. Ch. XIV, p.660) Vaisampayana has said that the yati-dharma, or the Saṃnyāsa doctrine, has been described in the Bhagavadgītā. In the description of the duties applicable to the four stages of life, given in the Manu-Smṛti, there is at the end of the sixth chapter a description of the Yati-dharma (religion of Ascetics), which is followed by a description as of an alternative path, of the Karma-Yoga described in the Gītā or in the Bhāgavata doctrine, under the name of the 'Karma-Yoga of Vedic Saṃnyāsins'; and it is clearly stated there, that "the highest Release is ultimately obtained by continually doing one's duties desirelessly" (Manu. 6.96); and this clearly shows that the Karma-Yoga was acceptable to Manu. And I have quoted authorities at the end of Chapter XI of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.505 to 509) to show that it was also acceptable to the other Smṛti-writers. Arjuna now raises the following doubt as to this tradition –].

अर्जुन उवाच

§§ अपरं भवतो जन्म परं जन्म विवस्वतः ।

कथमेतद्विजानीयां त्वमादौ प्रोक्तवानिति ॥ 4.4 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(4.4) Your birth is subsequent, and that of Vivasvat was beyond (that is, earlier); (that being so) how can I realise that You expounded (this Yoga) 'ādaу' (that is, before ~Translator.)?



[In replying to this question of Arjuna, the Blessed Lord describes the work done by Him in His various incarnations and again emphasises the Attachment-less Karma-Yoga or the Bhāgavata doctrine, saying "I too have been performing Actions in this fashion"-].

श्रीभगवानुवाच

बहूनि मे व्यतीतानि जन्मानि तव चार्जुन ।  
तान्यहं वेद सर्वाणि न त्वं वेत्थ परन्तप ॥ 4.5 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(4.5) O Arjuna! both yourself and

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Myself have lived through many lives. I know all this; (and) O Parantapa! you do not (this is the difference).

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् ।  
प्रकृतिं स्वामधिष्ठाय संभवाम्यात्ममायया ॥ 4.6 ॥

(4.6) Being the Lord of (all) created beings, and free from births, (and) though the form of My Ātman never suffers 'vyaya' (that is, modification), yet, governing My own Prakṛti, I come to birth by My own Māyā.

[ In the Spiritual Knowledge contained in this stanza, a fusion has been made of the Kapila-Sāṃkhya with the Vedānta philosophy. The Sāṃkhya doctrine is that the Prakṛti creates the world of its own accord; but the Vedāntins look upon Prakṛti as a form of the Parameśvara, and believe that the world is created as a result of the Parameśvara governing (becoming adhiṣṭhita in) His own Prakṛti. This unimaginable power of the Parameśvara to create the entire cosmos from His Imperceptible form is called ' Māyā ' in the Gītā; and there are similarly such statements in the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad as "māyām tu prakṛtiṃ vidyān māyinaṃ tu maheśvaram" ( Śve. 4.10), that is, "Prakṛti is nothing else but Māyā, and the Parameśvara is the Lord of that Māyā", and "asmān mayi sṛjate viśvam etat" (Sve. 4. 9), that is, "from it, the Lord of Māyā, creates this world". See the exhaustive discussion made by me in Chapter IX of the Gītā-Rahasya on the questions, (i) why is Prakṛti called 'Māyā'? (ii) what is the form of this Mays? (iii) what is meant by saying that the world is created as a result of Māyā? etc. Having thus explained how the Imperceptible (avyakta) Parameśvara becomes Perceptible (vyakta), that is to say, how Karma . is seen to have come into existence, the Blessed Lord now explains when and why He does so –].

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत ।

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥ 4.7 ॥

(4.7) O Bhārata! whenever Righteousness declines and Unrighteousness becomes powerful, then I Myself come to

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birth.

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम् ।

धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥ 4.8 ॥

(4.8) I take birth in different Yugas for protecting the Righteous and destroying the Unrighteous, and for establishing Righteousness.

[ In both these stanzas, the word 'Dharma' does not mean 'the Vedic religion relating to life in the other world'. The word principally means and includes the duties of the four castes, justice, morality, and other similar things. The import of this stanza is that when injustice, immorality, cruelty, and tyranny begin to rule in the world and the righteous are harassed and the unrighteous predominate, the Blessed Lord becomes incarnated in the shape of a brilliant and powerful human being, in order that proper order should rule in the world which He created, and that the world should derive happiness (Gī. 10. 41); and He thus re-establishes the disorganised condition of the world. It has been stated in the previous chapter that 'loka-saṁgraha' (Universal welfare) is only another name for the work which the Blessed Lord does by becoming incarnated in this manner; and that the Self-Realised (ātmajñānins) must do the same work as far as their power or

authority extends. (Gī. 3.20). It has thus been stated when and for what reason the Parameśvara becomes incarnated. The Blessed Lord now explains what state is attained by those persons who realise this principle and act according to it –]

§§ जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।

त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥ 4.9 ॥

वीतरागभयक्रोधा मन्मया मामुपाश्रिताः ।

बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः ॥ 4.10 ॥

(4.9) He, who understands the principle underlying these transcendental births and Actions, he, O Arjuna! after shedding the Body, conies and joins Me, without being re-born.

(4.10) Many people, whose love, anger, and fear have gone, who are devoted to Me, and seek shelter in Me,

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becoming (thus) pure by the austerity in the shape of Knowledge, have come and become merged in My Form. [ In order to understand the transcendental births of the Blessed Lord, it is necessary to understand how the Parameśvara becomes qualityful as a result of Māyā` ; and when one understands that, one acquires Spiritual Knowledge; and when one fully understands the transcendental Karma or Action of the Blessed Lord, one becomes acquainted with the principle of remaining unattached to Karma even after performing it. In

short, when one has fully under-stood the transcendental births and the transcendental Karma of the Parameśvara, one becomes fully acquainted with both Spiritual Knowledge and Karma-Yoga; and, as that is all which is necessary for obtaining Release, such a person cannot but ultimately obtain union with the Blessed Lord. Therefore, when a man has Realised the transcendental births and the transcendental Karma of the Blessed Lord, that is all he need Realise; and it is not necessary to separately study Spiritual Knowledge or the Desireless Karma-Yoga. Therefore, the Blessed Lord asks you to contemplate on His births and deeds, and understand the principle underlying them, and act accordingly; and says that, having done this, nothing else is required to be done for obtaining union with the Blessed Lord. This is indeed the true worship of the Blessed Lord. The Blessed Lord now mentions the fruit and the usefulness of inferior kinds of worship –]

§§ ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।

मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः पार्थ सर्वशः ॥ 4.11 ॥

(4.11) In that way in which they worship Me, I give them Fruit accordingly. O Pārtha! whichever path is followed, a man ultimately comes and joins into My path.

[The latter portion of this stanza, namely, "mama vartmānuvartante" etc., has come above (3.23) in a somewhat different meaning; and that will show how the meaning of words differs in the Gītā according to anterior and posterior contexts. The Blessed Lord now explains why

different persons reach Him by different paths, if it is true that by whichever way one goes, one ultimately reaches the Parameśvara –]

काङ्क्षन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।

क्षिप्रं हि मानुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥ 4.12 ॥

(4.12) People, who desire (only) the Fruit of Action (and not the destruction of the bonds of Karma), worship deities in this world,-because, (that) Fruit of Action is soon obtained in this world of human beings.

[These very ideas have appeared again later on in Chapter VII (See Gī. 7. 21, 22). The true fruit of the worship of the Parameśvara is Release, and it is obtained only after the bond of Action has been fully destroyed, after a considerable length of time and by deep and solitary worship; but, very few persons are so far-sighted or industrious. This stanza means that almost all people want to have something or other in this world, as the Fruit of their Action; and that such people run after deities (Gī. Ra. Ch. XIII p.589). But the Gītā says that this is in the end a kind of worship of the Parameśvara, and that when this Yoga grows.it ultimately culminates in Desireless "Worship, and eventually Release is obtained (Gī. 7.19). The Blessed Lord has explained before that the Parameśvara

becomes incarnated for the re-establishment of Righteousness. HE now explains in short what is necessary to be done for the re-establishment of Righteousness. –]

§§ चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः ।

तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम् ॥ 4.13 ॥

(4.13) I Myself have created the arrangement of the four castes (into Brahmins, Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras), consistently with the differences in their qualities and Actions. It is I, Who am the Maker of it, and (I am) also an akartā (that is, One Who has not made that arrangement), and avyaya (that is, inexhaustible ~Translator.).

[This stanza means that although the Parameśvara is the Doer (kartā), yet, as He. is. always unattached (niḥsaṅga) as.

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described in the next stanza, He is necessarily a Non-Doer (akartā), (See Gītā. 5.14). There are also other apparently inconsistent descriptions later on of the form of the Parameśvara, e.g., "sarvendriyaguṇābhāsaṁ sarvendriyavivarjitam" (Gī. 13.14). See the description of the difference between the qualities of the four different castes later on in Chapter XVIII (18.41 – 49). The Blessed Lord now explains the hidden meaning of the words, ' One Who does,

and at the same time, does not do ', which the Blessed Lord has used with reference to Himself –]

न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।

इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते ॥ 4.14 ॥

(4.14) I am not touched by the lepa, (that is, the adverse effect) of Karma, because, My Desire is not in the Fruit of Action. He who Knows Me in that way, is not affected by Karma.

[It has been stated above in the 9th stanza that "he who understands My birth and My Action attains Release ". This stanza contains an elucidation of the principle of ' Action ' mentioned in that stanza. The word 'understands' means and includes 'understands and acts accordingly'. This stanza means that the Blessed Lord is not affected by the Action which He performs, because He does not perform the Action, entertaining the Hope of Fruit; and he who understands this principle and acts accordingly cannot be affected by Action. The Blessed Lord now fortifies the proposition laid down in this stanza by an actual example –]

एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।

कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥ 4.15 ॥

(4.15) Knowing this, those who strove after Emancipation in ancient times, also performed Action; therefore, do you also perform the Action (Karma) performed by the ancients in the past,



[A definite advice has been given to Arjuna to perform Action, as there is no antagonism between Action and Release. But this gives rise to a doubt as to what is essentially

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meant by the opinion of the School of Renunciation that 'Release is attained by Abandonment of Action, that is, by Inaction (akarma)'. Therefore, the Blessed Lord now starts a disquisition on what Action is; and He ultimately lays down in the 23rd stanza the proposition that Non-Action (akarma) does not consist in giving up Action; and that, Desireless Action is to be called Non-Action (akarma),]

§§ किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः ।

तत्ते कर्म प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्षयसेऽशुभात् ॥ 4.16 ॥

(4.16) Even the Wise are confused as to what is karma (Action ~Translator.)? and what is akarma (Abandonment of Action ~Translator.); (therefore,) I shall explain to you that kind of Karma, by knowing which, you will be free from sin.

['akarma' is a 'nañ-samāsa'; and the 'a' = ' nañ', in it, grammatically means both 'absence of' (abhāva), or 'impropriety of' (aprāsastya); and it cannot be said that both these meanings may not be meant here. Nevertheless, as a third division of Action called 'vikarma' has been mentioned in the next stanza, the word 'akarma' in this stanza must be taken

to mean particularly, that 'Abandonment of Action' which the School of Renunciation called 'the literal abandonment of Action'. Nay, it will be seen from my commentary on the 18th stanza, that it is not necessary to totally abandon Action, as prescribed by the School of Renunciation; that, such Abandonment of Action is not true 'akarma'; and that, the true meaning of the word 'akarma' is quite different.]

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः ।

अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः ॥ 4.17 ॥

(4.17) The path (gatiḥ ~Translator.) of Karma is moot; (therefore,) it is necessary to understand what is karma,. (that is, Action~Translator.) and it is necessary to understand what is vikarma (viparīta karma), (that is, Wrong Action ~Translator.) j and it is also necessary to understand what is

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akarma (not performing Action).

कर्मण्यकर्म यः पश्येदकर्मणि च कर्म यः ।

स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् ॥ 4.18 ॥

(4.18) That man, who sees Inaction in Action, and Action in Inaction, is the Jñānin (sage ~Translator.) among men; he is 'yukta', (that is, 'yoga-yukta '), (that is, steeped in the Karma-Yoga ~Translator.), and one who performs all Actions.

[ This and the following five stanzas contain a description of 'karma', and 'akarma' and 'vikarma'; and whatever has been left over here has been made up later on in Chapter XVIII, where the three kinds of Abandonment of Action (karma-tyāga), the three kinds of Action (karma) and the three kinds of Doers (kartā) have been explained (Gī. 18.4 – 9; 23 – 25; and 26 – 28), It is necessary to explain here in short and clearly what the doctrines of the Gītā are about karma, akarma, and vikarma, having regard to the disquisitions on Karma in these two places; because, the commentators have created a considerable amount of confusion about these things. The followers of the School of Renunciation favour the 'literal' abandonment of Action; and, therefore, they try to stretch the meaning of the term 'akarma' here in support of their own doctrine; and the followers of the Mīmāṃsā school favour desire-prompted Action like Yajñas and Yāgas; and look upon everything else as 'vikarma'. There are besides, the differences of the Mīmāṃsā school between the Daily (nitya) and the Occasional (naimittika) Action; and the supporters of the Śāstras try at the same time to push forward their own doctrine. In short, as a result of this stretching in all directions, it ultimately becomes very difficult to understand what the Gītā understands as 'akarma' and what as 'vikarma'. Therefore, it must be borne in mind in the first instance, that the scientific basis on which this point has been considered in the Gītā is the path of the Karma-Yogin, who performs Action desirelessly;

and not of the Mīmāṃsakas, who perform Desire-prompted Action, nor of the followers of the School of Renunciation, who abandon Action. "When one accepts this basis of the Gītā, it follows first of all that

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'akarma' cannot possibly mean 'karmaśūnyatā' (total absence of Action); and that no man can under any circumstances be Inactive (Gī. 2.5; 18.11); because, nobody can escape sleeping, sitting, or at any rate, being alive; and if it is impossible to be totally Inactive (karma-śūnyatā), one has to decide what is meant by 'akarma'. To this the reply of the Gītā is: Do not look upon 'Karma' as 'the mere performing of Action'; but decide as to whether an Action is 'karma' or 'akarma' by considering the good or bad results which flow from it. If the Cosmos itself is karma, man cannot escape karma, so long as he exists in the Cosmos. Therefore, the consideration of what a man should do or not do, must be from the point of view of to what extent such Action will prejudicially affect him. That Action, which being performed, does not prejudicially affect the Doer, must be deemed to have lost its nature of being a 'karma' (that is, its 'karmatva'), or its binding force (bandhakatva); and if in this way, any Karma loses its 'karmatva' or 'bandhakatva', then necessarily that 'karma' becomes an 'akarma'. It is true that the ordinary meaning of the word 'akarma' is 'total absence of Action' (karma-śūnyatā); but considering the matter

scientifically, that meaning is not appropriate here, because even 'sitting quiet', that is, 'not doing anything', is very often an Action in itself. For instance, if one sits quiet, when someone is hammering one's parents, and does not do anything to protect them, that is 'Inaction' (akarma), that is, 'total absence of Action' (karma-śūnyatā), according to the ordinary meaning of the word. It is nevertheless an 'Action' (karma), nay, even a Wrong Action (vikarma); and, according to the doctrine of Causality, one cannot escape the evil results of this kind of Action. Therefore, the Gītā says paradoxically and very skilfully in this stanza that he who understands that even 'akarma' amounts to 'karma' (sometimes, even very terrible karma); and also that even in performing Action, such Action is 'dead action' or 'akarma' from the point of view of Causality, is the real Jñānin; and this meaning has been explained in different ways in the subsequent stanzas.

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According to the Gītā science, the only true means by which one escapes the bondage of Action is by performing Action unattachedly, that is, 'giving up the Hope of Fruit' (See Gī. Ra. Ch. V. pp.148 to 156 and Ch. X. p.394). Therefore, that Action alone, which is performed in this way, that is, unattachedly, is the proper, that is, the sāttvika Action, according to the Gītā (Gī. 18.9). That is the true 'Non-Action' (akarma) according to the Gītā; because, its 'karmatva' (that is, its nature of being a '

karma '), or its-binding force (bandhakatva) according to the law of Causality (karma-vipāka-prakriyā) is lost. When, from all that men do, (and even sitting idle is included in the word 'do'), Action of the above kind, that is, sāttvika Action, or, "akarma' according to the Gītā, is deducted, all that remains can be divided into two parts, namely, (i) rājasa Action and (ii) tāmasa Action. Out of this, tāmasa Action is the result of Ignorance (moha), and therefore, it falls into the category of Wrong Action (vikarma). Thus, if Action is abandoned as a result of Ignorance, it is still a 'vikarma', not an 'akarma' (Gī. 18.7). Then remains the rājasa Action. This Action is not of the first class, that is, sāttvika; nor is it what the Gītā describes as true 'akarma'. The Gītā calls this 'rājasa Action'; but if anyone wants to do so, he may use the single word 'karma' to mean this kind of rājasa Action. In short, whether a particular Action is a 'karma' or an 'akarma' is to be decided according to the binding force of the Action, and not from its nature of being an act, nor also according to what may be laid down-in barren religious treatises. The Aṣṭāvakra-Gītā supports the Path of Renunciation. Yet, even in it, it is said that:—

nivṛttir api mūḍhasya pravṛttir upajāyate ।

pravṛttir api dhīrasya nivṛttiphalabhāgiṇī ॥ (Aṣṭā.

18.61);

that is: "the 'nivṛtti' of fools, that is, their turning away from Action, as a result of perversity or of Ignorance, in itself amounts to 'pravṛtti' or 'Karma'; and the 'pravṛtti' of the wise,

that is to say, their Desireless Action, gives the same benefit as nivṛtti (i.e., Renunciation) or karmatyāga

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(that is, Abandonment of Action)". This very meaning has been very skilfully, paradoxically, and metaphorically set out in the above stanza; and unless one carefully bears in mind this definition of 'akarma', he cannot fully understand the argument about 'karma' and 'akarma' in the Gītā. The Blessed Lord now explains this very meaning more explicitly in the following stanzas ]

यस्य सर्वे समारम्भाः कामसंकल्पवर्जिताः ।

ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः ॥ 4.19 ॥

(4.19) He, whose samārambhāḥ (that is, Actions) are devoid of the Desire for Fruit, is referred to by Jñānins, as the learned man, whose Actions are reduced to ashes in the Fire of Knowledge.

[This clearly shows that, "karma (Action) is reduced to ashes by jñāna", is not to be understood as directing Abandonment of Action, but the performance of Action, having abandoned the Desire for Fruit. (Gī. Ea. Ch. 2. pp.394 – 400). Similarly, the meaning of the words 'sarvārambha-parityāgi', – that is, 'one who gives up all ārambha or activity', – which appear later on in the description of the devotee of the Blessed Lord (Gī.

12.16; 14.25), is also made clear by this. Now the Blessed Lord makes the same meaning more explicit as follows –]

त्यक्त्वा कर्मफलासङ्गं नित्यतृप्तो निराश्रयः ।

कर्मण्यभिप्रवृत्तोऽपि नैव किञ्चित्करोति सः ॥ 4.20 ॥

निराशीर्यतचित्तात्मा त्यक्तसर्वपरिग्रहः ।

शारीरं केवलं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥ 4.21 ॥

(4.20) (The man) Who, having given up the Attachment for the Fruit of Action, is always happy and nirāśraya [ that is, one who does not possess a Reason, which has taken 'shelter' (āśraya ~Translator.) in the means of obtaining the Fruit of Action, by wishing to do a particular Action, for a particular result] is (said to be) doing nothing whatsoever, though he may be engrossed in performing Actions.

(4.21) When a person, who gives up the āśīḥ (that is, the Desire for Fruit), who regulates his Mind, and who has become free

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from all Attachments, performs Actions, which are merely śarīra (that is, performed by the Body, or only by the organs of Action), he does not incur sin.

[Some commentators interpret the word ' nirāśraya ' in the 20th stanza as 'one who has no home', that is, a Saṁnyāsin;



but that is not correct. The word 'āśraya' may be interpreted to mean 'house' or 'home'; but what is meant in the present place is not the 'home' of the person who does the act, but the 'home' in the shape of 'a motive for the act which he performs'; and what is meant is, that there should be no such 'home'; and the same meaning has been made clear in the words 'anāśritaḥ karmaphalam' (Gī. 6.1); and the same meaning has also been adopted by Waman Pandit in his Marathi commentary on the Gītā known as the Yathārthadīpikā. Similarly, the word 'śārīra' in the 21st stanza does not mean the Action of begging alms sufficient for the maintenance of the body, etc. The true meaning of the words 'kevalam śārīraṁ karma' is consistent with the description contained later on in Chapter V (5.11) that, "Yogins, that is, Karma-Yogins perform all Actions merely by their organs of Action, without entertaining any Attachment or Desire in their minds". It is true that the organs of Action perform the Action, but as the Mind is equable, the person who performs the Action, does not incur either sin or merit]

यदृच्छालाभसंतुष्टो द्वन्द्वतीतो विमत्सरः ।

समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च कृत्वापि न निबध्यते ॥ 4.22 ॥

(4.22) The man, who is satisfied with whatever falls to his lot according to fortuitous circumstance, who is free from the pairs of Opposites (such as, happiness and unhappiness etc.), who is devoid of jealousy, and who considers it the same, whether there is success for the Action or not, is not bound by

the merit or the sin of Actions, even though he performs (Actions).

गतसङ्गस्य मुक्तस्य ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ।

यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते ॥ 4.23 ॥

(4.23) (He) Who is without Attachment, free (from love and hate), whose Mind is concentrated on Knowledge

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(in the shape of an Equable Reason), and who performs- Actions (merely) for the purpose of a Yajña, his entire Karma-is destroyed.

[The doctrine explained in Chapter III above (3.9), that Action or ritual performed for the sake of a Yajña does not become binding according to the vyavasāyātmikā school, and that when the same Action is performed with Attachment, it becomes productive of Release instead of leading to heaven, is again referred to in this stanza. The word 'samagraṁ' in the phrase 'samagraṁ praviliyate' is very important. The Mīmāṃsā school looks upon the happiness of heaven as the highest ideal, or the summum bonum; and in their opinion, Action which leads to heaven is not binding; but the Gītā aims beyond heaven, that is, at Release; and from this point of view, even that Action which leads to heaven, is binding. Therefore, it is

said that if Action is performed, even for the purpose of a Yajña, but with an unattached Reason, it is 'totally' (samagra) destroyed, that is to say, it does not become productive even of heaven but leads to Release. But, nevertheless, there is an important distinction to be borne-in mind in the portion of this Chapter which deals with the Yajñas. In Chapter III, it has been stated that these same Yajñas, that is, the immemorial Yajñacakra or the paraphernalia of ritualistic performances, prescribed by the Śrutis and the Smṛtis, must be kept going; but the Blessed Lord now says that the word 'Yajña' is not to be taken in the limited meaning of 'offering til (sesamum) or rice or animals into the fire', as offerings to deities, or as meaning the performance of the duties relative to the four castes, in accordance with their respective religion, though, desirefully. The words 'idaṁ na mama' uttered at the end of the hymn, while throwing the offering into the fire, which mean 'this is not mine', contain a selfless, non-egotistical principle, which is the most important part of the Yajña; and, performing in this way all the Actions of one's life, saying 'na mama' (that is, 'this is not mine'), that is, giving up mine-ness and performing them merely with the idea of dedicating them to the Brahman, is in itself a

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stupendous Yajña, or 'homa'; and by means of this Yajña, an offering of oblation (yajana) is made to the deity of all deities,

that is, to the Parameśvara, or the Brahman. Needless to say, the doctrines of the Mīmāṃsā school relating to the sacrifice of wealth apply equally well to this stupendous sacrifice; and the person who performs every Action in the world unattachedly, and for the sake of Universal Welfare (lokasaṃgraha) becomes liberated from the 'entire' (samagra) consequence of the Action, and ultimately attains Release (Gī. Ra. Ch. XI, pp.478 to 483). This stupendous Yajña in the form of dedicating everything to the Brahman is described in the beginning of the next stanza; and the Blessed Lord after describing thereafter the form of other specific Yajñas of lesser importance, sums up the whole thing in the 33rd stanza by saying that, "such a 'Jñāna-yajña' (sacrifice of Knowledge) is the best of all".]

§§ ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ।

ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना ॥ 4.24 ॥

(4.24) He, whose belief is that the arpaṇa (that is, the act of offering) is Brahman; that, the havi (that is, the oblation which is to be offered) is Brahman; that, the Brahman offered a sacrifice into the Brahman-fire; and that, (all) Karma is (in this way") Brahman, attains the Brahman.

[In the Śāṅkara-bhāṣya, the word 'arpaṇa' has been interpreted as "the means by which the 'offering' (arpaṇa ) is made, such as a ladle etc."; but that interpretation is rather far-fetched. It is more to the point to take the word 'arpaṇa', as meaning the 'act of offering' or 'the act of offering into the

fire'. Thus far, there has been a description of persons who perform the yajna desirelessly, that is, in order to dedicate it to the Brahman (that is, make a 'brahmārpaṇa' of it). The Blessed Lord now describes the desire-prompted Yajña addressed to particular deities –]

दैवमेवापरे यज्ञं योगिनः पर्युपासते ।

ब्रह्माग्नावपरे यज्ञं यज्ञेनैवोपजुह्वति ॥ 4.25 ॥

(4.25) Some (Karma-) Yogins perform sacrifice addressed to deities (instead of for dedicating it to the Brahman); and

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others make a sacrifice of a Yajña, by a Yajña, into the Brahman-fire.

[ The latter portion of this stanza refers to the description in the Puruṣa-Sūkta that the gods offered a sacrifice to the Virāṭa-formed Yajña-puruṣa, cf., " yajñena yajñam ayajanta devāḥ " (Ṛg. 10. 90. 16); and the words, "yajñam yajñenaivopajuhvati" in this stanza are synonymous with the words "yajñena yajñam ayajanta" in the Ṛg-Veda, and seem to be used accordingly. It is evident that the Virāṭa-formed animal, which was sacrificed into the Yajña performed in the beginning of the world, and the god, for propitiating whom the sacrifice was made, must both have been of the form of the Brahman. In short, as the Brahman continually pervades all things in the world, the

statement in the 24th stanza that, in performing all Actions desirelessly, the Brahman is always sacrificed by the Brahman, is scientifically correct; all that is wanted is that one's Mind has been formed accordingly. This is not the only stanza in the Gītā which refers to the Puruṣa-Sūkta, but later on, the description in Chapter X, is also consistent with that Sūkta. The Blessed Lord has now described the . Yajñas performed for propitiating particular deities. HE now explains how the Yogic performance of Breath Control (prāṇāyāma) etc., prescribed in the Pātañjala-Yoga, or even the performance of religious austerities, is a kind of Yajña, if the words 'agni' (fire), 'havi' (sacrificial offering) etc., are taken in their symbolical meanings—]

श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये संयमाग्निषु जुह्वति ।

शब्दादीन्विषयानन्य इन्द्रियाग्निषु जुह्वति ॥ 4.26 ॥

सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्माणि प्राणकर्माणि चापरे ।

आत्मसंयमयोगाग्नौ जुह्वति ज्ञानदीपिते ॥ 4.27 ॥

(4.26) Others sacrifice the śrotrādi (that is, ears, eyes, etc.) organs into the Fire (agni) in the shape of a Limit (saṁyamana), and others again, sacrifice the objects of sense, such as, sound etc., into the Fire in the shape of the senses.

(4.27) Others still, sacrifice all the Actions (that is, functions) of the various organs, and vital forces (prāṇa) into the Fire of

Yoga in the shape of Mental control, which has been lit by Knowledge (jñāna).

[ In the above stanza, are described two or three different kinds of symbolical Yajñas e. g., (1) controlling the senses, that is, allowing them to perform their respective functions within proper limits; (2) totally destroying the senses, by wholly giving up the objects of sense, which go to feed the senses; (3) putting an end to the Actions, not only of the senses, but even of the vital forces (prāṇa) themselves, by entering into a complete mental absorption (samādhi), and remaining steeped in the joy of the Ātman. Now, if these are compared with a Yajña, then, in the first kind of Yajña, the limit (saṁyamana) which is placed on the senses becomes the Fire (agni); because, by working out the simile, all that enters the limit may be said to have been offered into the Fire. Similarly, in the second kind of Yajña, the organs themselves, and in the third kind of Yajña, both the organs and the prāṇa (vital forces) are compared with the material offered up as a sacrifice-offering, and the Control of the Ātman (ātmasaṁyamana) becomes the Fire. There are, besides, others, who only perform the Prāṇāyāma (i.e., control of the Prāṇa (life) in the shape, of the breath ~Translator.); and these are described further on in the 29th stanza. This idea of symbolically extending the original meaning of the word 'yajña', namely, 'a sacrifice of various materials', and making it include religious austerities (tapa), Renunciation (saṁnyāsa), Mental absorption (samādhi),

control of the prāṇa or breath (prāṇāyāma ), and other means of getting merged into the Blessed Lord, has not been mentioned for the first time in the Gītā. In the 4th chapter of the Manu-Smṛti, where the state of the house-holder is being described, after stating that no house-holder should give up the five principal sacrifices (mahā-yajña) prescribed by the Smṛtis, namely, the Ṛṣi-yajña, the Deva-yajña, the Bhūta-yajña, the Manuṣya-yajña, and the Pitṛ-yajña, it is stated that many persons "sacrifice the speech into the organs, or the Prāṇa (life) into the speech, or ultimately even propitiate

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the Parameśvara by a Jñāna-yajña (that is, the sacrifice by-Knowledge, or sacrificing everything into the sacrificial fire of Knowledge ~Translator.)", (Manu. 4.21 – 24). Considering-the matter from the historical point of view, it can be seen that when the sacrifice of wealth of various kinds prescribed in the Śruti-texts for propitiating Indra, Varuṇa, and other deities fell into disuse, and the devices of attaining the state of the Parameśvara by Pātañjala-yoga, Saṁnyāsa, or Metaphysical Knowledge came more and more into vogue, the meaning of the word 'Yajña' was widened, and it was made to symbolically include all the various devices of obtaining Release. The principle at the root of this is the tendency to indicate subsequent religious methods by the same technical terms as had come to be formerly accepted in the religion. Whatever



may be the case, it is clear from this exposition in the Manu-Smṛti, that this idea had acquired general acceptance before, or at any rate at the same' time as, the Gītā.]

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथापरे ।

स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः ॥ 4.28 ॥

अपाने जुह्वति प्राणं प्राणेऽपानं तथापरे ।

प्राणापानगती रुद्ध्वा प्राणायामपरायणाः ॥ 4.29 ॥

(4.28) In this way, some Yatis observing severe vows (that is, persons who have acquired mental control) perform the sacrifice of wealth; others perform the sacrifice by austerity, others by Yogic practices, others by svādhyāya (that is, by observing the ritual prescribed for one's own caste), and others by Jñāna (i.e., Knowledge ~Translator.).

(4.29) Others taking to prāṇāyāma , and controlling the movements of the prāṇa (outgoing breath ~Translator.) and the apāna (incoming breath ~Translator.) breaths, sacrifice the prāṇa-breath into the apāna-breath, while others sacrifice the apāna-breath into the prāṇa-breath.

[The idea conveyed by this stanza is that performing the Prāṇāyāma (breath-control) according to the Pātañjala Yoga is a kind of Yajña. As this Yajña in the form of

the Pātañjala-Yoga has been mentioned in the 29th stanza, the words 'sacrifice by Yogic practices' ('yoga-yajña') in the 28th stanza must be taken to mean the Yajña according to Karma-Yoga, The word 'prāṇa' in the term 'prāṇāyāma' usually indicates both the śvāsa (inhaling) and the ucchvāsa (exhaling) of the breath; but when a distinction is made between 'prāṇa' and 'apāna', the word 'prāṇa' means the 'out-going' breath, that is to say, the 'ucchvāsa' breath; and the word 'apāna' means the 'incoming' breath (Ve. Sū. Śāṁ. Bhā. 2.4.12; and Chāndogya Śāṁ. Bhā. 1. 3. 3). It must be borne in mind that these meanings of the words 'prāṇa' and 'apāna' are different from their ordinary meanings. Taking these meanings, when the prana, that is, the exhaled breath or the 'ucchvāsa' has been sacrificed into the apāna, that is, the intaken breath, the pranayama which is performed, is known as the 'pūraka'; and conversely, when the apāna has been sacrificed into the prana, the prāṇāyāma which is performed is named 'recaka'. When both the prāṇa and the apāna are controlled or stopped, the pranayama which is performed is named 'kumbhaka'; now there remain besides these, the three breaths named vyāna, udāna, and samāna. Out of these, the breath 'vyāna' is located at the meeting point between the prāṇa and the apāna, and comes to be used when one has to perform actions requiring force, when one partially controls the breath, such as, in drawing a bow or lifting up weights etc. (Chān. 1.3.5), The udāna breath is the one which leaves the body at the moment

of death (Prašna. 3.7) and the samāna breath is the breath which continually takes food-juices to every part of the body (Prašna. 3.7). These are the ordinary meanings of these various kinds of breath according to the Vedānta-Śāstra; but in some places even quite different meanings are intended; for example, in the 212th Chapter of the Vana-parva of the Mahābhārata, quite different characteristics are mentioned of the prana and other breaths; and 'prāṇa' is explained as meaning the breath in the head, and the apāna is described as meaning the breath which escapes downwards from the body

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(Prašna. 3 – 5 and Maitryu. 2 – 6). According to the above stanza, the breath which is controlled is said to be 'sacrificed' into the other kinds of breath]

अपरे नियताहाराः प्राणान्प्राणेषु जुह्वति ।

सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः ॥ 4.30 ॥

यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् ।

नायं लोकोऽस्त्ययज्ञस्य कुतोऽन्यः कुरुसत्तम ॥ 4.31 ॥

(4.30) Others still moderating their food, sacrifice the prana (vital airs) into prana itself. All these being sin-diminished as a result of sacrifice, and (being) well-versed in sacrifice,

(4.31) and partaking of the amṛta (food), which remains over after the sacrifice, attain the eternal Brahman. The non-

performers of sacrifice have not (success even in) this world;. how then, O Kuruśreṣṭha, (can they obtain) the next world?

[ In short, although the performance of Yajñas is the duty of every human being, according to the directions of the Vedas, yet, it is not that this Yajña is only of one kind. Whether one performs Pranayama, or religious austerities, or the reading of the Vedas, or the Agniṣṭoma-yajña, or the Paśu-yajña (sacrificing animals), or throws til, rice, or clarified butter into the fire, or performs worship, or performs the five domestic sacrifices (gr̥ha-yajña), such as, naivedya (food offered to household gods), vaiśvadeva (food offered into the fire), etc., if one has destroyed the Attachment for the Fruit of Action, all these become Yajñas in the wider meaning of the word; and then, all the doctrines of the Mīmāṃsā school relating to the partaking of what remains after the performance of the Yajña, become applicable to each of them. The first of these rules is that 'no Action performed for the purpose of a Yajña has a binding effect'; and that rule has been mentioned above in the 23rd stanza (See commentary on Gī. 3.9). The second' rule is, that every householder should partake of food in the company of his wife, after he has performed the five principal sacrifices, and given food to guests, beggars etc., and that when a person lives in this manner, the house-

holder-state becomes profitable, and leads to a happy state after death. It has been stated in the Manu-Smṛti, and in other Smṛtis, that every house-holder should always become a 'vighasāśī' (i.e., one who eats the vighasa ~Translator.), and 'amṛtāśī' (i.e., one who eats the amṛta ~Translator.), after the word 'vighasa' has been defined as meaning 'whatever remains, over after the guests have eaten', and the word 'amṛta' has been defined as meaning 'that which remains over after the performance of the Yajña'; cf., "vighasaṁ bhuktaśeṣaṁ tu yajñaśeṣāṁ athāmṛtam" –Manu, 2.285 (See Gī. 3.13 and Gītā. Ra. p.403). The Blessed Lord now says that this rule which applies to the ordinary domestic sacrifices also applies to all the various Yajñas mentioned above. Not only is any act performed for the purpose of a Yajña not binding, but if any portion of these acts, which remains over after the performance of the Yajña, is utilised by one for his own use, even that is not prejudicial. (See Gītā Ra. Chapter XII p.535 bottom). The last sentence in this stanza, namely, "the non-performers of sacrifice have not (success even in) this world", is fraught with deep meaning and is important. It does not mean only that in the absence of the Yajñas there is no rain, and that in the absence of rain, the course of life on this world cannot go on; but, taking the word 'Yajña' in its wider meaning, the social principle, that unless everyone sacrifices something or other dear to him, the ordinary course of the world cannot go on, by all getting equal opportunities, is necessarily included in it. For instance, the Western socialistic

doctrine that unless everyone controls his own freedom of action, all others cannot enjoy equal freedom of action, is an example of this principle; and if the same meaning, is to be conveyed in the terminology of the Gītā , one will have to speak here in terms of a Yajña, by saying that 'unless everyone to some extent performs a Yajña of his Freedom of Action, the course of life on this world cannot go on'. When the Yajña has thus been made the foundation of the entire social structure by thus giving it an extended and wide meaning, it need not be said in so many words that the social arrangement will not continue;

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properly, unless every human being learns to perform these Yajñas as pure duties.]

एवं बहुविधा यज्ञा वितता ब्रह्मणो मुखे ।

कर्मजान्विद्धि तान्सर्वानिवं ज्ञात्वा विमोक्ष्यसे ॥ 4.32 ॥

(4.32) In this way, various kinds of Yajñas, are always taking place in the mouth of the Brahma; know that all these arise from Karma; when you have acquired this Knowledge, you will obtain Release.

[The Yajñas of physical materials prescribed by the Śrutis, such as, the 'jyotiṣṭoma' etc., are performed by throwing oblations into the Fire; and as the sacrificial fee is supposed to be the

mouth of the gods, these sacrifices are stated by the Śāstras to reach the various deities. But, someone may raise the doubt that since the symbolical Yajñas mentioned above are not performed in Fire, which is the mouth of the gods, how can merit be acquired by performing them? Therefore, in order to remove this doubt, the Blessed Lord now says that these Yajñas are performed into the mouth of the Brahman itself. The purport of the second part of the stanza is that he who understands this extended meaning of the performance of a Yajña, and does not understand that word in the narrow meaning given to it by the Mīmāṃsā school, does not remain narrow-minded, but is enabled to understand the form of the Brahman. The Blessed Lord now explains which is the most superior of all these kinds of Yajñas –]

श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञः परन्तप ।

सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥ 4.33 ॥

(4.33) O Parantapa! the jñāna-maya yajña (that is, the Yajña performed by sacrificing everything into the Fire of Realisation ~Translator.) is better than the dravya-maya yajña (that is, the Yajña, performed by sacrificing materials ~Translator.); because, O Pārtha! all Actions of all kinds are ultimately merged in Jñāna.

[The word 'Jñāna-yajña' has occurred twice later on in the Gītā (Gī. 9.15 and 18.70). The Yajña of materials

performed by men, is performed by them for attaining the Parameśvara. But one cannot attain the Parameśvara, unless one is acquainted with His form. Therefore, the method of acquiring the Knowledge of the form of the Parameśvara and of attaining the Parameśvara by leading a course of life which is consistent with that Knowledge, is known as the 'Jñāna-yajña'. This Yajña is mental, and is performed with the help of the Reason, and it is naturally considered more worthy than the Yajña of wealth. This Jñāna included in the Jñāna-yajña is of supreme importance in the Science of Release; and it is the firm doctrine of the Gītā that (i) all Karma is destroyed by means of this Jñāna; that, (ii) in any case the Jñāna of the Parameśvara must ultimately be obtained; and that, (iii) there is no Release except by the Acquisition of Jñāna. Nevertheless, I have proved in detail in Chapters X and XI of the Gītā-Rahasya that the words "all Actions of all kinds are ultimately merged in Jñāna" in this stanza are not to be understood as meaning that 'after a man has acquired Jñāna, he may give up Karma'. The Gītā preaches to everybody that (i) all Actions must be performed as a matter of duty for universal welfare, though they may not be needed for one's own self; that, (ii) as all these Actions are performed with Jñāna, that is, with an equable Reason, the person, who performs them, is , not affected by the merit or sin of that Action (see, stanza 37



later); and that (iii) as this Jñāna-yajña leads to Release, one must perform the Yajña, but with Jñāna, and with a desireless frame of mind.]

§§ तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।

उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥ 4.34 ॥

यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेवं यास्यसि पाण्डव ।

येन भूतान्यशेषेण द्रक्ष्यस्यात्मन्यथो मयि ॥ 4.35 ॥

(4.34) Remember that, philosopher-Jñānins will, by your offering obeisance (to them ~Translator.), and questioning and service, teach you that Jñāna,

(4.35) by having acquired which, O Pāṇḍava! you will not again be overcome by mental

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confusion in this fashion, and by means of which Knowledge, you will come to see everything created as located in your-self and ultimately in Me.

[ There is a reference here to the Knowledge of the identity of the Ātman with all created beings, that is, to seeing the entire creation embodied in oneself, and seeing oneself embodied in the entire creation, which has been dealt with later on (Gī. 6.29). As the Ātman (Self) and the Bhagavān (Blessed Lord) are fundamentally uniform, the entire creation is comprehended

in the Ātman, that is, ultimately, also naturally in the Bhagavan, or the Blessed Lord; and the-three-fold distinction between the Ātman (one's Self), the rest of the creation, and the Blessed Lord, naturally dis-appears. It is, therefore, said in the Bhāgavata-purana, in describing the Bhagavad-bhakta (the devotee of the Blessed Lord) that "that man is the best Bhāgavata or devotee of the Blessed Lord, who sees the entire creation in the Blessed Lord and in himself" (Bhāg. 11.2. 5). See the further explanation of this important principle of the Gītā in Chapter XII of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.543 to 555); and also in Chapter XIII, from the point of view of Devotion (pp.600 – 601).]

अपि चेदसि पापेभ्यः सर्वेभ्यः पापकृत्तमः ।

सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं सन्तरिष्यसि ॥ 4.36 ॥

यथैधांसि समिद्धोऽग्निर्भस्मसात्कुरुतेऽर्जुन ।

ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा ॥ 4.37 ॥

(4.36) Even if you are a sinner, greater than any other sinner, you will sail over the whole sin by (this) ship of Jñāna.

(4.37) Just as the kindled fire reduces to ashes (all) fuel, in the same way, O Arjuna! (this) Jñāna-formed Fire reduces to ashes (the prejudicial or unprejudicial binding force of) all Action.

[ The Blessed Lord has described the worth of Jñāna. HE now explains how this Jñāna can be acquired ]

§§ न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।

तत्स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥ 4.38 ॥

(4.38) There is nothing indeed in this world so holy as

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Jñāna. That Jñāna is automatically acquired in course of time by the person who has mastered the Yoga (that is, the Karma-Yoga).

[The word 'Action' in the 37th stanza means 'the binding force or effect of Karma or Action' (Gī. 4.19). Acquiring Knowledge by means of desireless Actions, which one has started by one's Reason, is the principal means of acquiring Knowledge, or the means accessible to Reason (buddhi); but, for those who cannot acquire Knowledge in this way by their own Reason, the Blessed Lord now prescribes the other path, namely, the Path of Faith –]

श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।

ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥ 4.39 ॥

(4.39) That person having Faith, who, having acquired control over the senses, pursues this Knowledge, (also) acquires it; and when he has acquired Knowledge, he immediately after-wards experiences the highest peace.

[In short, that Knowledge (Jñāna), and the tranquility (śānti) which is acquired by means of the Reason (buddhi), is also acquired by Faith (śraddhā). But he who has neither Reason nor Faith –]

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ।

नायं लोकोऽस्ति न परो न सुखं संशयात्मनः ॥ 4.40 ॥

(4.40) But (he) who has himself neither Knowledge nor Faith, such a doubter is utterly destroyed. For the doubter, there is neither this world, nor the next, nor any happiness whatsoever.

[The Blessed Lord has shown two ways of acquiring Knowledge, namely, (i) one's own Reason and (ii) Faith. HE now explains the respective uses of the Jñāna-Yoga and the Karma-Yoga, and summarises the whole subject-matter –] '

§§ योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणं ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् ।

आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनंजय ॥ 4.41 ॥

(4.41) O Dhanañjaya! Actions cannot bind the ātma-jñānin (Self-Realiser ~Translator.) who has cast off Karma (that is, the

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bondage of Karma) by taking shelter in the (Karma-) Yoga, and whose doubts have been annulled by means of Jñāna.

तस्मादज्ञानसम्भूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः ।

छित्त्वैनं संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत ॥ 4.42 ॥

(4.42) Therefore, cutting off with the sword of Knowledge, this doubt, which has arisen in your heart as a result of Ignorance, take shelter, in the (Karma-) Yoga, (and) O Bhārata! stand up (and fight).

[ Just as in the Īśāvāsyopaniṣad (Īśā. 11; Gī. Ra. Ch. VI, p.501), after shortly showing the respective uses of vidyā and avidyā, a direction has been given to act without giving up either vidyā or avidyā, so in the Gītā, in these two stanzas, after shortly showing the respective uses of Jñāna and (Karma-) Yoga, the advice has been given to Arjuna to perform Action with the joint help of Jñāna .and Yoga. The respective uses of these two are that when a man performs Action by the Desireless Jñāna-Yoga, the binding effect of Karma (Action) is destroyed, and it does not obstruct Release; and as a result of Jñāna, all doubt or mental confusion is annihilated, and one attains Release. Therefore, the ultimate and final advice to Arjuna is, that he should not seek the protection of either Karma alone, or of Jñāna alone, but should make use of both, and fight. It has been shown in the Gītā-Rahasya (Ch. III, p.80) that because Arjuna has to stand up and fight here by taking shelter or protection from Yoga, the word 'Yoga' must here be interpreted as meaning the Karma-Yoga. This fusion of Jñāna and Yoga, is also again referred to later on in the Gītā (Gī. 16.1), in de-scribing the characteristics of 'godly endowment' (daivī saṁpatti), by the words "jñāna-yogavyavasthitiḥ".]

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ज्ञानकर्मसंन्यासयोगो नाम चतुर्थोऽध्यायः ॥

4 ॥

Thus ends the fourth chapter entitled the Jñāna-Karma-SAMNYASA Yoga in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and

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Arjuna on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman (that is, on the Karma-Yoga), in the Upaniṣad sung (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

[ It must be borne in mind that the word 'saṁnyāsa' in the phrase 'jñāna-karma-saṁnyāsa' is not literal karma-tyāga (Abandonment of Action), but is the Desireless 'saṁnyāsa' or the 'Dedication' of all Action to the Parameśvara; and the same explanation has been given later on in the beginning of Chapter XVIII.]

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# CHAPTER V – SĀMNYĀSA-YOGA.

पञ्चमोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER V.

[In this chapter, has been given the clear answer of the Blessed Lord to the doubts likely to be raised by the followers of the Path of Renunciation to the doctrines laid down in Chapter IV, after expressing those doubts through the mouth of Arjuna. If Jñāna is the ultimate resolution of all Action (4.33); if all Action is destroyed by Knowledge (4.37); and if the sacrifice into Knowledge is superior to the sacrifice of wealth (4.43), then, why has the Blessed Lord, after saying in the second chapter that "it is most meritorious for a Kṣatriya to fight the battle prescribed by his religion" (2.31), summarised the fourth chapter by paying "therefore, stand up to fight, taking shelter in the Karma-Yoga" (4.42)? To this the reply of the Gītā is that what is needed is the fusion of (i) Knowledge, which is necessary for Release, by removing all mental confusion and of (ii). Karma, which cannot be escaped from, and which though not necessary for Release, is yet necessary for Universal Welfare (4.41). But, even to this an objection may be raised to the effect that, if both the Karma-Yoga and the Sāṃkhya-Yoga are proper according to the Śāstras, why should not a person

adopt the Sāṁkhya-Yoga and abandon Action, if that pleases one better? Needless to say, there must be made a clear decision as to which of these two paths is the better one; and as Arjuna was seized with the same doubt, he now raises the following question, in the same way as he had raised the - question in the beginning of the third chapter—]

अर्जुन उवाच

§§ संन्यासं कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शंससि ।

यच्छ्रेय एतयोरेकं तन्मे ब्रूहि सुनिश्चितम् ॥ 5.1 ॥

(5.1) Arjuna said:—O Kṛṣṇa! once you say that the Path of Renunciation is superior, and again that Karma-Yoga (that is, the path of continuing to perform Action) is superior; therefore, tell me definitely that one, of these

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two, which is really śreya, (that is, more praiseworthy).

श्रीभगवानुवाच

संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ ।

तयोस्तु कर्मसंन्यासात्कर्मयोगो विशिष्यते ॥ 5.2 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(5.2) Karma-saṁnyāsa and Karma-Yoga, both these (paths or Niṣṭhās) are niḥśreyasakara (that is, producing Release); but,



(that is, though both may be of the same value from the point of view of Release), the worth (that is, the efficacy) of Karma-Yoga, out of these two, is greater than that of Karma-Saṁnyāsa .

[This question and answer are both unambiguous and clear. The word 'śreya' in the first stanza means 'more praise-worthy', or, better; and, to the question of Arjuna about the relative value of the two courses, the reply of the Blessed Lord is, "karma-yogo viśiṣyate", that is "the Karma-Yoga is the better (path) ". Nevertheless, as this doctrine is not consistent with the Sāṁkhya theory, that a man must abandon or make a literal Saṁnyāsa (Renunciation) of Action, after he has acquired Knowledge, some commentators, have taken hold of the word 'viśiṣyate', and contented themselves with saying that that was a mere hollow praise of the Karma-Yoga by way of an arthavāda, after they had ineffectually struggled to twist this plain-meaning question and answer; and saying, that the true intention of the Blessed Lord was not to praise the Karma-Yoga! If it was the opinion of the Blessed Lord that there should be no Action after the acquisition of Knowledge, could He not have replied to Arjuna that: "out of these two paths, the Path of Renunciation is the better one "? But, as instead of doing so, the Blessed Lord, after saying in the first part of the second stanza that, "the paths of performing Action and abandoning Action, are both equally productive of Release", uses the word 'tu', that is, 'but' , in the second part of the stanza and unambiguously lays down the doctrine that,

'tayoh', that is, 'out of these two paths', "the path of Performing

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Action is more praise-worthy (śreya) than the path Abandoning Action", it is clearly proved that He -was of the opinion that in the siddhāvasthā (state of Perfection), the Jñānin must still go on performing desirelessly, till death, as a duty, and for Universal Welfare, the same-selfless Action, which he was performing in the 'sādhānāvasthā' (the state of Perfecting) for acquiring-Knowledge. The same meaning has been made clear in. Gītā 3.7, and the term 'viśiṣyate' has also been used there; and in the next stanza, that is, in Gītā 3.8, the words. "Action is superior to Inaction" were again clearly repeated. Now, it is true, that there are descriptions in several places in the Upaniṣads (Br. 4.4.22) to the effect, that Jñānins (those, who have acquired Knowledge) roam, about begging, without having any 'lokaiṣaṇā ' (desire for society), or 'putraiṣaṇā' (desire for children). But, it has. not been stated in the Upaniṣads that this is the only path, which can be followed after a man has acquired. Knowledge, and that there is no other path. Therefore, it. is not proper to attempt to harmonise the Gītā with the above-mentioned sentences from the Upaniṣads. The Gītā does not say that this Path of Renunciation described in the Upaniṣads is not productive of Release. But, the firm doctrine of the Gītā is, that though the

Karma-Yoga and Renunciation are both equally productive of Release, that is to say, though, from the point of view of Release, the effect of both is the same, yet, considering the course of life in the world, the better or more praise-worthy path is-to continue to desirelessly perform Action even after one has acquired Knowledge. This interpretation of mine is-not the one which has been accepted by the majority of commentators; and, they have treated the Karma-Yoga as secondary; but, in my opinion, these interpretations of the commentators are not plain and straight-forward; and, as I have given a detailed statement of my reasons for my interpretation in Chapter XI of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.420 to 431), I shall not take up space here by saying more about it. After the Blessed Lord had thus given His clear decision as to which of the two paths is more praise-worthy,

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HE now proves that though these two paths might appear different to people in ordinary life, yet, they are not essentially different—]

§§ ज्ञेयः स नित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति ।

निर्व्वन्द्वो हि महाबाहो सुखं बन्धात्प्रमुच्यते ॥ 5.3 ॥

सांख्ययोगौ पृथग्बालाः प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिताः ।

एकमप्यास्थितः सम्यग्बुभयोर्विन्दते फलम् ॥ 5.4 ॥

यत्सांख्यैः प्राप्यते स्थानं तद्योगैरपि गम्यते ।

एकं सांख्यं च योगं च यः पश्यति सः पश्यति ॥ 5.5 ॥

संन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमाप्तुमयोगतः ।

योगयुक्तो मुनिर्ब्रह्म नचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥ 5.6 ॥

(5.3) He, who does not hate (anything) and who does not desire (anything), that man should be looked upon as a 'permanent ascetic' (though he might be performing Action); because, O Mighty-armed Arjuna! he, who has. been liberated from the pairs of Opposites (such as, pain and happiness, etc.), is, without effort, liberated from (all) the bonds (of Karma).

(5.4) Fools say that Sāṃkhya (Karma-Saṃnyāsa) and Yoga (Karma-Yoga) are different; the learned do not say so; if any one path is properly followed, the result of both is achieved.

(5.5) That (Released-) state, which is reached by the (followers of the) Sāṃkhya (Path), there too do the Yogins (that is, the Karma-Yogins) go; he who sees that the (two paths of) Sāṃkhya and Yoga are (in this way) the same, may be said to have seen (the true principle).

(5.6) Even Renunciation, O Mahābāho! is difficult to achieve, in the absence of Yoga, (that is, in the absence of Karma). That sage who has become steeped in the Karma-Yoga, is not long in attaining the Brahman.

[A clear and exhaustive explanation has been given later on from the seventh to the seventeenth chapter of the Gītā as to how the same Release can be obtained by Karma-Yoga, that is,

by not abandoning Action, as can be obtained by the Sāṃkhya-Yoga. All that is intended to be said for

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the present is, that as there is no difference between the two paths from the point of view of Release, it is not proper to magnify the difference between these two paths, which have been in vogue from times immemorial, and to quarrel about it; and the same logical argument has been repeated over and over again later on (See Ql. 6.2 and 18.1, 2; and my commentary on it). The stanza "ekam sāmṅkhyam ca yogam ca yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati" has appeared twice with slight alterations in the Mahābhārata (Śān. 305.19; 316.4). Though Jñāna is considered of supreme importance in the Path of Renunciation, that Jñāna is not perfected unless Action is performed; and though in the Karma-Yoga, Action is performed, yet, one does not fail to reach the Brahman by it, since such Action is performed with the help of Jñāna (Gī. 6.2); then, where is the sense of raising a cry that these two paths are different? If it is said that the performance of Action has in itself a binding-effect, the Blessed Lord says that such objection does not apply to Action performed desirelessly –]

§§ योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ।

सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥ 5.7 ॥

नैव किञ्चित्करोमीति युक्तो मन्येत तत्त्ववित् ।

पश्यञ्छृण्वन्स्पृशञ्जिघ्रन्नाशनङ्गच्छन्स्वपञ्चवसन् ॥ 5.8 ॥

प्रलपन्विसृजन्गृह्णन्नुन्मिषन्निमिषन्नपि ।

इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्त इति धारयन् ॥ 5.9 ॥

(5.7) (He,) Who has become steeped in the (Karma-) Yoga, whose conscience is pure, who has conquered his Mind and his senses, and whose Ātman has become the Ātman of all created beings, remains untouched (by the merit or sin of Action), though he performs (all Actions).

(5.8) (He,) Who has understood the basic principles, and is steeped in the Yoga, should realise that: "I do not do anything"; (and) in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, walking, sleeping, breathing,

(5.9) speaking, excreting, taking, opening the eye-lids, and closing them, (should act) believing that (merely)

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the senses are acting with reference to their respective objects.

[The last two stanzas form one sentence; and the various Actions described in them are the Actions of the different organs of the body; for instance, excretion is the action of the anus; taking, that of the hand; moving the eye-lids, "that of the

Vital Airs; seeing, that of the eyes, etc. "I do not do anything" does not mean that one should allow one's senses to do what they want. What is meant is that when once one has lost the egotistical sense of 'I', the unprompted senses are not capable of performing any evil action of their own accord, and remain under the control of the Ātman. In short, even if a man becomes a Jñānin, the organs of breathing etc., will continue to perform their respective functions. Nay, even remaining alive for a fraction of a second is in itself an Action; then, where remains the difference that the Jñānin, who follows the Path of Renunciation, gives up Action, and that the Karma-Yogin performs Action? Both are bound to perform Action. But, as the same acts cease to have a binding effect when the Attachment based on Egoism has been discarded, giving up the Attachment remains the only basic principle; and the Blessed Lord now further amplifies the same idea—]

ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः ।

लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा ॥ 5.10 ॥

कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि ।

योगिनः कर्म कुर्वन्ति सङ्गं त्यक्त्वात्मशुद्धये ॥ 5.11 ॥

(5.10) He, who performs Actions, dedicating them to the Brahman and unattachedly, to him sin does not adhere (touch), just as water does not adhere to the leaves of a lotus-plant.

(5.11) Therefore, the Karma-Yogin performs all Actions (without entertaining the egotistical notion that he is performing them) for Self-purification, unattachedly, by the body (merely), or by the Mind (merely), or by the Reason (merely), and even by the senses merely

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[The words 'Body', 'Mind', and 'Reason' in this stanza have been used with reference to the bodily (kāyika), vocal. (vodka) and mental (mānasika) divisions of Action. Although the adjective 'kevalaiḥ' (merely) is placed, in the original, behind the word 'indriyaiḥ' alone, it also applies to-the words 'Body', 'Mind', and 'Reason' (Gī. 4.21). Therefore, in my translation, I have placed it behind all the other words, as behind the word 'Body'. The meaning is, as explained in the 8th stanza above, that if a man performs any act, which is merely bodily (kāyika), or merely vocal (vācika), or merely mental (mānasika), giving up-egoism, and without any Attachment to the Fruit of Action, he does not incur any sin (See Gītā 3. 27; 13. 29;. and 18. 16). When there is no egoism, all the Action which is performed is merely the Action of the organs; and as the Mind and the other organs are only the evolutes (vikāra) of Prakṛti, the doer does not incur the binding effect of such Action. The Blessed Lord now proves this doctrine according to the Śāstras –]

युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम् ।



अयुक्तः कामकारेण फले सक्तो निबध्यते ॥ 5.12 ॥

सर्वकर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी ।

नवद्वारे पुरे देही नैव कुर्वन्न कारयन् ॥ 5.13 ॥

(5.12) He, who has become 'yukta' (that is, Yoga-yukta), (that is, steeped in Yoga ~Translator.) gives up the Fruit of Action and attains the final complete tranquility; and the 'ayukta' (that is, one who is not Yoga-yukta), becoming attached to the Fruit, as a result of kāma (that is, of desire), becomes bound (by-the merit or the sin).

(5.13) The embodied (man), who has controlled the senses, renouncing all Actions mentally (not literally), inhabits happily this (body-) city with its nine, entrances, doing nothing and causing nothing to be done.

[That is to say, he realises that the Ātman is a non-doer, and that the entire activity is of Prakṛti; and therefore, he lives quietly, or in a state of indifference (See Gītā 13.20 and 18.59). The two eyes, the two ears, the two nostrils,.

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the mouth, the opening for urinating, and the anus are looked upon as nine openings or doors of the body. The Blessed Lord now gives a metaphysical explanation of the fact that the

Karma-Yogin remains 'yukta', though he is performing Actions—]

§§ न कर्तृत्वं न कर्माणि लोकस्य सृजति प्रभुः ।

न कर्मफलसंयोगं स्वभावस्तु प्रवर्तते ॥ 5.14 ॥

नादत्ते कस्यचित्पापं न चैव सुकृतं विभुः ।

अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः ॥ 5.15 ॥

(5.14) The prabhu (that is, the Ātman or the Parameśvara) does not create either the capacity of men for Action, nor their Actions, nor the attendant Fruit of Action (accruing to the doers). Inherent nature, (that is, Prakṛti) performs (everything).

(5.15) The vibhu (that is, the all-pervading Ātman or Parameśvara) does not acquire either the merit or the sin of anybody. As Knowledge is covered by the covering of ignorance (that is to say, as a result of Māyā), all created beings are confused.

[The principle involved in both these stanzas is originally from the Sāṃkhya philosophy (See Gītā-Rahasya pp.222 to 224). But, as according to Vedāntists, the Ātman = the Parameśvara, they extend the principle that 'the Ātman is a non-doer' to the Parameśvara. The Sāṃkhyas look upon Prakṛti (Matter) and Puruṣa (Spirit) as the two fundamental principles, and look upon the Prakṛti as the active agent and the Ātman as inactive; but the Vedāntists go even beyond that, and say that the root of both Puruṣa and Prakṛti is a quality-less Parameśvara, who is

a Non-Boer (udāsin) like the Ātman of the Sāṃkhya; and that the entire activity is of Māyā or of Prakṛti (Gī. Ra. p.369). The Blessed Lord now explains that the ordinary man does not understand these things on account of Ignorance; and that, as the Karma-Yogin understands the difference between the Doer and the Non-Doer, he remains unscathed, notwithstanding that he performs Action—]

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§§ ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः ।

तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम् ॥ 5.16 ॥

तद्बुद्धयस्तदात्मानस्तन्निष्ठास्तत्परायणाः ।

गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः ॥ 5.17 ॥

(5.16) But those, whose own such Ignorance has been, destroyed by Knowledge, their Knowledge throws light on the Highest Principle like the Sun;

(5.17) and those, whose Reason has become engrossed in this Highest Principle, whose Internal Sense (antaḥkaraṇa) has found happiness in. It, and become fixed on It, and devoted to It, their sin is-entirely washed away by Knowledge; and they do not come, to birth again.

[The Blessed Lord now gives a further description of the state of the 'brahma-bhūta' (merged in the Brahman) or

'jīvanmukta' (Released in this life) state of these Karma-Yogins (not Saṁnyāsins), whose Ignorance has thus been destroyed –]

§§ विद्याविनयसंपन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।

शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥ 5.18 ॥

इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः ।

निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद्ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः ॥ 5.19 ॥

(5.18) Those who have become Pandits (that is, Jñānins), their vision is the same towards the Brahmin endowed with. Knowledge and humility, as towards a cow, or an elephant, or a dog, or a cāṇḍāla.

(5.19) Those, whose Mind, has thus become steady in a state of Equability, conquer the mortal, world, wherever they are (that is, without having to wait for death); because, the Brahman is faultless and equable; therefore, these persons (with an equable Reason) are (always) merged in the Brahman (that is, they have become: brahma-bhūta already in this world).

[ This is a repetition of the statement in the Upaniṣads that he, who has Realised that the Ātman-formed Parameśvara is a Non-Doer, and that the entire activity is

of Prakṛti, has 'become steeped in the Brahman' (brahma-saṁstha); and he attains Release, cf. "brahmasaṁstho 'mṛtatvam eti" (Chān. 2.23.1). Yet, it is clear from stanzas 1 to 12 above that, according to the Gītā, a man does not escape Action even though he has reached this state. This sentence from the Chāndogyaopaniṣad has been interpreted by Śaṅkarācārya so as to support the Path of Renunciation; but, if one considers the anterior and posterior context in the original Upaniṣad, it will be seen that the greater possibility is of this statement having been made with reference to the person who performs Actions appropriate to the three stages of life, even after having become brahma-saṁstha; and this same import has been very clearly set out at the end of the "Upaniṣad (See Chan. 8.15.1). As this state is reached during life after a man has attained the Knowledge of the Brahma (brahma-jñāna), it is called the 'jīvan-muktāvasthā' (state of being Released in life), (See Gī. Ra. Ch. X, pp.413 to 415). This is the highest pinnacle of Metaphysics, and the Yoga devices, such as, the control of the mental tendencies (citta-vṛttā-nirodha) etc., by which this state can be reached, are explained at length in the next chapter. This chapter contains only a further description of this state.]

न प्रहृष्येत्प्रियं प्राप्य नोद्विजेत्प्राप्य चाप्रियम् ।

स्थिरबुद्धिरसंमूढो ब्रह्मविद्ब्रह्मणि स्थितः ॥ 5.20 ॥

बाह्यस्पर्शेष्वसक्तात्मा विन्दत्यात्मनि यत् सुखम् ।

स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षयमश्नुते ॥ 5.21 ॥

(5.20) One should not become glad because one has got the priya (that is, the desired thing); nor should one become-, dejected, if something undesirable happens. One whose mind has (thus) become steady, and who does not suffer from mental confusion, such a Knower of the Brahman is (said to have become) 'steady in the Brahman'.

(5.21) He (alone), whose mind is not attached to the contacts (with the senses) of external objects, (that is, to the enjoyment of objects of sense), obtains (whatever) the happiness, which pertains to the Ātman; and such a person, who has become yukta as a

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result of union with the Brahman, enjoys inexhaustible happiness.

ये हि संस्पर्शजा भोगा दुःखयोनय एव ते ।

आद्यन्तवन्तः कौन्तेय न तेषु रमते बुधः ॥ 5.22 ॥

शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात् ।

कामक्रोधोद्वेगं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः ॥ 5.23 ॥

(5.22) As enjoyments, born of contacts (with external objects), have a beginning and an end, they become the cause of unhappiness. The wise man, O Kaunteya! does not find happiness in them.

(5.23) He, who has become capable (by control of the senses) of bearing in this world, before leaving this body (that is, till death), such pain as is born of Desire and Anger, is the liberated and the (truly) happy man.

[This is an expansion and elucidation of the advice of the Blessed Lord to Arjuna in the second chapter that he must bear pain as well as happiness (Gī. 2.14). In Gītā 2.14, the adjective "āgamāpāyinaḥ" (i.e., 'coming and going') has been applied to pain and happiness; whereas, here in the 22nd stanza, the word used is "ādyantavantaḥ" (i.e., 'with a beginning and an end'); and here the word 'bāhya' has been used instead of the word 'mātrā' used there; this stanza (i.e., stanza 21) also defines who is to be called 'yukta'. Bearing pain and happiness equably, and not avoiding them, is the true characteristic of yukta-ness. See my commentary on Gītā 2.61.]

§§ योऽन्तःसुखोऽन्तरारामस्तथान्तर्ज्योतिरेव यः ।

स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति ॥ 5.24 ॥

लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृषयः क्षीणकल्मषाः ।

छिन्नद्वैधा यतात्मानः सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥ 5.25 ॥

(5.24) He who has thus become internally (that is, in his conscience) happy (without laying any store by external happiness or unhappiness), who has found tranquility within himself, and similarly, who has acquired (this) internal light, such a (Karma-) Yogin has become Brahman-formed, and

attains the brahma-nirvana . Release (that is, the Release of being merged in and unified, with the Brahman),

(5.25) Those

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R̥ṣis, who have lost the sense of duality (that is, who have realised the principle that there is only one Parameśvara in all places), whose sins have been dissolved, and who have become engrossed in achieving the welfare of the entire creation by means of Self-control, attain Release in the shape of brahma-nirvāṇa.

कामक्रोधवियुक्तानां यतीनां यतचेतसाम् ।

अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं वर्तते विदितात्मनाम् ॥ 5.26 ॥

स्पर्शान्कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यांश्चक्षुश्चैवान्तरे भ्रुवोः ।

प्राणापानौ समौ कृत्वा नासाभ्यन्तरचारिणौ ॥ 5.27 ॥

यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायणः ।

विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः ॥ 5.28 ॥

(5.26) The yatins who are free from Desire and Anger, who are self-controlled and possessed of Self-Knowledge, attain the brahma-nirvāṇa Release 'abhitah' (that is, as if it is placed all round them, or in front of them; that is to say, wherever they are).



(5.27) That Release-desiring Muni, who keeps outside the (painful or pleasing) contacts (of the organs) with external objects; who, having fixed his gaze between the two eye-brows, and equalised the prāṇa and the apāna breaths passing through his nostrils,

(5.28) has obtained control over the senses, the Mind, and the Reason; .and, who has become free from Desire, Fear, and Anger, may be said to be 'perpetually Released'.

[It will be seen from Chapter IX (pp.320 and 344) and Chapter X (p.414) of the Gītā-Rahasya, that this description is of the Jīvan-muktāvasthā (state of being Released, while alive). But, the assertion of some commentators that it is a description of a man who follows the Path of Renunciation is not correct in my opinion. "Whether in the Path of Renunciation, or in the Path of Karma-Yoga, 'tranquility' (śānti) is one and the same; and to that extent, this description might apply to the Path of Renunciation; this cannot be denied; but, as in the beginning of this chapter, the Karma-Yoga has been mentioned as the superior path, and again in the 25th stanza, it is stated that Jñānins (sages) are engrossed in

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achieving Universal Welfare, it is clear that this description is of the Karma-Yogin Jīvan-mukta (Released-in-life) and not of the Saṁnyāsin (See Gī. Ra. p.520). To proceed; since, Realising

the Parameśvara, Who pervades the entire creation, is the highest ideal even according to the Path of Action (karma-mārga), the Blessed Lord finally says that –]

§§ भोक्तारं यज्ञतपसां सर्वलोकमहेश्वरम् ।

सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति ॥ 5.29 ॥

(5.29) Realising, (in this way), Me, Who am the Recipient, of (all) sacrifice and austerities, the Overlord of all spheres-(such as heaven, etc.) and the Friend of the entire creation, . he attains tranquility.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे

श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे कर्मसंन्यासयोगो नाम पञ्चमोऽध्यायः ॥ 5 ॥

Thus ends the fifth chapter entitled SAMNYĀSA-YOGA in, the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga included in the science of the Brahman (that is, on the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung (that is, told) by the Blessed;, Lord.

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# CHAPTER VI – DHYĀNA-YOGA.

षष्ठोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER VI.

[ Thus far it has been proved that, (i) though nothing except Knowledge is necessary for attaining Release, the Jñānin must continue to perform Actions even after the-Acquisition of Jñāna, for universal welfare; but that, (ii) he must perform these with an Equable Reason, and having given up the Desire for Fruit, so that they may not have any binding effect; that, (iii) this is known as the Karma-Yoga; and that, (iv) this path of life is more praise-worthy than the path of Renunciation of Action (karma-saṁnyāsa). Nevertheless, the justification of Karma-Yoga is not thereby finished. Already in Chapter III, in describing Desire, Anger, etc., the Blessed Lord has explained to Arjuna, that these enemies make their home in the organs, the Mind, and the Reason of humans, and destroy their Spiritual Knowledge (jñāna) as also their Specified Knowledge (vijñāna), (3.40); and advised him that he should, therefore, first conquer these enemies by controlling his senses. In order that this advice should be complete, it was necessary to explain (1) how to acquire control over the senses, and (2) what is Spiritual Knowledge and what Specified Knowledge;

but, in the meantime, the Blessed Lord, in reply to the question of Arjuna,. (i) explained to him which path of life, out of the paths of Karma-Yoga and Karma-Saṁnyāsa, was the better one r (ii) harmonised these two paths of life as far as possible; and (iii) showed how the Brahma-nirvana Release could be obtain-ed without giving up Action, and by performing Action with an unattached Reason. The Blessed Lord now starts in this chapter a description of the means by which it is possible to acquire this unattached (niḥsaṅga), or Brahman-devoted (brahma-niṣṭhā) state, which is necessary even in Karma-Yoga. Nevertheless, in order that it should be clear that this explanation has not been given for preaching the Pātañjala-Yoga independently, the Blessed Lord, to start with, repeats here what has been expounded

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in the previous chapters, namely that, the true Saṁnyāsin is the person, who performs Actions, having given up the Hope for Fruit of Action, and not the one, who abandons Action (5.3)–]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

§§ अनाश्रितः कर्मफलं कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।

स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर्न चाक्रियः ॥ 6.1 ॥

यं संन्यासमिति प्राहुर्योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव ।

न ह्यसंन्यस्तसंकल्पो योगी भवति कश्चन ॥ 6.2 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(6.1) That man is to be called a Saṁnyāsin and a Karma-Yogin, who performs (his Śāstra-enjoined) duties, without taking shelter in the Fruit of Action (that is, not having in his Mind a 'home' in the shape of Hope of Fruit). The niragni (that is, one who has given up Fire-ritual, such as, agnihotra etc.), or the akriya (that is, one who sits absolutely quiet, without performing any Action whatsoever), such a man is not (the true Saṁnyāsin, or the true Yogin).

(6.2) O Pāṇḍava, understand that what is known as Saṁnyāsa is (Karma-) Yoga, because no one can become a (Karma-) Yogin unless he makes a Saṁnyāsa (i.e., Renunciation ~Translator.) of the saṁkalpa (that is, of the Hope of Fruit in -the shape of a Desireful Reason).

[ This is only a repetition of the statements made in the previous chapters, such as, "ekam sām̐khyam ca yogam ca" (5.5); or, "there is no Saṁnyāsa except by Yoga" (5.6); or, "jñeyah sa nitya-saṁnyāsī" (5.3); and later on, where the whole subject-matter has been summarised in Chapter XVIII, the very same import is again repeated. In the state of a house-holder, one has to maintain an agnihotra (a perpetual sacrificial fire), and perform Yajñas, Yāgas etc. But, as it was not necessary for a person, who had become an ascetic, to thus maintain a perpetual fire, it is stated in the Manu-Smṛiti, that he should become niragni (i.e., free from Fire-ritual), and

live in the forest, and maintain himself by begging, and not take part in worldly affairs

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(Manu. 6.25 etc.). This dictum of Manu has been referred to in the first stanza above, and with reference to it, the Blessed Lord says that, "becoming 'niragni' or 'niṣkriya' is not a feature of true Saṁnyāsa". True Saṁnyāsa consists in giving up a Desireful Reason, or the Hope of Fruit. Saṁnyāsa consists in the frame of the Mind, and not in the external act of giving up the maintenance of the sacrificial fire, or ritual. Therefore, that man alone, who gives up the Hope of Fruit, or the saṁkalpa, and thus performs his duties, can be called the true Saṁnyāsin. This doctrine of the Gītā is different from the doctrine of the Smṛti-writers; and I have to refer the reader to Chapter XI of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.480 – 496), where I have clearly shown how the Gītā harmonises it with the doctrine of the Smṛtis. Having in this way explained what true Saṁnyāsa is, the Blessed Lord now explains the difference between the Actions to be performed in the sādhanāvasthā, that is, in the state before Knowledge has been acquired, and those to be performed in the siddhāvasthā that is, after the Acquisition of Knowledge, giving up the Hope of Fruit –]

§§ आरुरुक्षोर्मुनिर्योगं कर्म कारणमुच्यते ।

योगारूढस्य तस्यैव शमः कारणमुच्यते ॥ 6.3 ॥

(6.3) To the Muni who desires to become (Karma-) yogārūḍha (that is, enthroned on the Karma-Yoga ~Translator.), Karma is said to be the kāraṇa, (that is the means); and when that same man has become yogārūḍha (that is, has become a complete Yogin), the śama (that is serenity ~Translator.) is said to become later on the kāraṇa (for the Karma).

[Commentators have utterly misinterpreted the meaning of this stanza. The word 'yoga' used in the first part of the stanza means Karma-Yoga; and it is accepted by every-body that, for acquiring that Yoga, Karma is the kāraṇa, or the means; but commentators have interpreted the words, " after having become 'yogārūḍha', śama becomes the kāraṇa for him", as supporting the Path of Renunciation. What they say is: 'śama' means 'upaśama' (that

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is, 'cessation' ~Translator.) of Karma; and he who has acquired Yoga must, therefore, give up Karma! Because, according to them, the Karma-Yoga is a part (aṅga), that is, a preliminary accomplishment, of Saṁnyāsa. But, this interpretation is only a doctrine-supporting interpretation, and not the correct interpretation. For, (1) if the Blessed Lord has stated already in the first stanza of this chapter, that that man alone is a true Yogin, or yogārūḍha, who "performs his duty" without taking shelter in the Fruit of Action, and that the person who does

not perform Action (who is an akriya) is not a true Yogin, it would be totally illogical to imagine, that the Blessed Lord could have in the third stanza advised the Yogin, or the yogārūḍha, to make the sama of Karma, that is, to give up Karma. Although it may be the opinion of the Saṁnyāsa school, that the yogārūḍha should not perform Action, after having attained tranquility, yet, that opinion is not acceptable to the Gītā; and there is clear advice in several places in the Gītā to the effect that the Karma-Yogin should, even in the State of Perfection (siddhāvasthā) continue to perform all Actions, desirelessly, and merely as duties, and so long as he is alive, in the same manner as the Blessed Lord. (Cf. Gī. 2. 71; 3. 7 and 19; 4. 19 – 21; 5. 7 – 12; 12. 12; 18. 56 and 57; and Gī. Ra. Ch. XI and XII). (2) The second reason is: How is it possible to interpret 'śama' as meaning the 'śama' of Karma? The word 'śama' appears three or four times in the Bhagavadgītā (Gī. 10.4; 18.42); and in those places, as also in common parlance, it means 'peace of Mind'. Then, why should it be interpreted to mean the 'peace or the ending of Karma'? In order to get over this difficulty, commentators have, in the Paiśācya-bhāṣya on the Gītā, treated 'tasya' as being the sixth (possessive) case of the neuter gender, and read the line as: 'tasyaiva karmaṇaḥ śamaḥ', (that is, ' the śama, which is tasya, namely, of the Karma, referred to in the first half of the stanza), instead of referring the demonstrative pronoun 'tasyaiva' in the phrase 'yogārūḍhasya tasyaiva' to the word



'yogārūḍhasya'! But, this syntax of the sentence is also not plain; because, undoubtedly, the second part of the

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stanza has been started in order to show the state reached afterwards, that is, after he has completed his training, by the man studying the Yoga, who has been described in the first part of the stanza; therefore, the word 'tasyaiva' cannot be interpreted as meaning 'karmaṇaḥ eva'; and even if that interpretation is taken, then, that word should be joined to the words 'kāraṇam ucyate', instead of to the word 'śama'. Then, the syntax of the sentence will run as follows, namely, 'śamaḥ yogārūḍhasya tasyaiva karmaṇaḥ karaṇam ucyate', which means, "the śama' now becomes the kāraṇa for the Karma of the yogārūḍha". (3) The third reason for rejecting the interpretation of the commentators is as follows: according to the Path of Saṁnyāsa, nothing remains to be done for the yogārūḍha and all his Karma ends in 'śama'; and if this is true, the word 'kāraṇa' in the sentence, "the śama' becomes the 'kāraṇa' for the yogārūḍha", becomes totally meaningless. The word 'kāraṇa' is always a relative (sāpekṣa) term. As soon as you say 'kāraṇa' (means), there must be some 'kārya'(effect) of it. But, according to the Saṁnyāsa doctrine, there is no more any kārya left for the yogārūḍha. If 'śama' is taken as the 'kāraṇa', or the means for Release, even that interpretation is not proper. Well; if it is said that 'śama' is the 'kāraṇa', that is,

the means, for the Acquisition of Knowledge, then, this being a description of the yogārūḍha, that is, of one, who has already reached the state of complete perfection, he has already acquired Knowledge by means of Karma. Then, of what is this 'śama', the 'kāraṇa'? The commentators of the Saṁnyāsa school cannot give any satisfactory solution of this question. But, if one considers the matter, disregarding the interpretation of the commentators, then, in interpreting the second part of the stanza, the word 'karma' in the first part of the stanza comes before the mind by reason of its proximity; and then, one gets the interpretation that: as the yogārūḍha cannot escape Action for Universal Welfare (lokasaṁgraha), though he has no self-interest left (Gī. 3.17 – 19), 'śama' now becomes the 'kāraṇa' or the means, for him to perform that Action.

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The same interpretation is arrived at, if one considers the statement in the previous chapter that, "yuktaḥ karma-phalaṁ tyaktvā śāntim āpnoti naiṣṭhikīm" (Gī. 5.12), that is, "the Yogin attains complete tranquility by abandoning the Fruit of Action"; because, in that stanza, 'tranquility' is related not to the 'Abandonment of Action', but to the 'Abandonment of the Hope of Fruit'; and it has been clearly stated in that place, that the karma-saṁnyāsa, which the Yogin has to perform, has to be performed 'manasā', that is, by the Mind (Gī. 5.13); and

that, by the Body, that is, by the organs of Action, such a Yogin must perform all the various Actions. In my opinion, the present stanza is an example of what is known in the alaṅkāra-śāstra (science of Figures of Speech) as the 'anyonyā-laṅkāra', as it embodies some strangeness of meaning, or sweetness of sentiment as is produced by that alaṅkāra; for, after stating, in the first part of the stanza, when Karma, becomes the 'kāraṇa' of 'śama', the latter part of the stanza, states conversely, when 'śama' becomes the 'kāraṇa' of the Karma. The Blessed Lord says that in the beginning, that is, in the preparatory stage (sādhānavasthā), Action (Karma) becomes the means ('kāraṇa') of tranquility (śama), that is, of Yoga-siddhi; that is to say, when a person goes on performing, as far as possible, all Actions with a Desireless Mind, his Mind becomes peaceful, and he thereby ultimately attains complete perfection of Yoga (yoga-siddhi). But, when the Yogin has become yogārūḍha (steeped " in Yoga), that is to say, when he has reached the state of perfection, (siddhānavasthā), this relation of cause and effect between Karma and 'śama' is reversed; and instead of Karma being the means of obtaining 'śama', or its 'kāraṇa', the 'śama' itself becomes the means for the Karma; that is to say, the yogārūḍha, thereafter performs all his Actions merely as duties, and without entertaining any Hope of Fruit, and with a peaceful Mind. In short, this stanza does not mean that a man becomes free from Karma in the state of Perfection; and all that the Gītā says is that, the relation of cause and effect between Karma and 'śama'

in the preparatory stage (sādhanaāvasthā) becomes changed or inverted in the State of Perfection (siddhāāvasthā), (Gī. Ra. Ch. XI, pp.449 to 451). It is nowhere stated in the Gītā that the Karma-Yogin must ultimately give up Action; nor is it intended to say so. It is, therefore, not proper to take some stanza or other from the Gītā, wherever there is a chance of doing so, and by some stratagem or other to give it a renunciatory meaning, That is why the Gītā has become so difficult to understand for many in these days. The proposition, that the yogārūḍha must continue to perform Actions, is also borne out by the definition given in the next stanza.; That stanza is as follows –]

यदा हि नेन्द्रियार्थेषु न कर्मस्वनुषज्जते ।

सर्वसंकल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते ॥ 6.4 ॥

(6.4) Because, when a man does not become attached to these objects of sense (such as, speech, touch etc.), nor to Karma, and when he makes a Renunciation of all saṁkalpa (that is, of the Hope of Fruit in the shape of a Desireful Reason, and not of Action, literally), he is called a 'yogārūḍha'

[This stanza may be said to be a continuation of the last stanza or perhaps even of the last three stanzas. This clearly shows that the Gītā advises the Yogārūḍha to give up not Action, but

the Hope of Fruit, or the Desireful Reason, and to perform Action desirelessly, and with a peaceful frame of mind. The words 'saṁnyāsa of saṁkalpa' appear in the second stanza above; and they must be given the same meaning here, as in that stanza. Karma-Yoga includes Saṁnyāsa in the shape of the Abandonment of the Hope of Fruit, and that man alone is the true Saṁnyāsin, or Yogin, or the true Yogārūḍha who performs all Actions, having abandoned the Hope of Fruit. The Blessed Lord now says that succeeding in such a Desireless Karma-Yoga, or Renunciation of Hope of Fruit, is a matter within the control of every man; and if he

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himself makes the effort, it is not impossible for him to achieve it –]

§§ उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥ 6.5 ॥

बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।

अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् ॥ 6.6 ॥

(6.5) (Man) should himself bring about his own emancipation; one should not (at any time) discourage oneself: because, (every man) himself is (said to be) his own bandhu (that is, helper), or his own enemy.

(6.6) Who has himself conquered himself, becomes his own helper; but who does not understand himself, acts towards himself as his own enemy.

[ These two stanzas contain a description of the doctrine of Free Will (ātma-svātantrya), and propound the principle that everyone must bring about his own emancipation; and that, however powerful Prakṛti (Nature) may be, it' is within one's own hands to conquer it and to bring about one's own betterment (Gī. Ra. Ch. X, pp.383 to 391). In order that this principle should be firmly impressed on the mind, it has been stated (i) positively, that is, by showing, when the Ātman becomes one's friend; and again (ii) negatively, by showing when the Ātman may be said to be one's enemy; and this very principle is again referred to in 13. 28. As the word 'ātma' has three meanings in Sanskrit, namely, (1) the 'antarātmā', (2) one's self, and (3) the Internal Sense, or the Mind, this word, 'ātma' appears several times in this and the following stanzas. The Blessed Lord now explains what result is obtained by bringing the Ātman under control –]

§§ जितात्मनः प्रशान्तस्य परमात्मा समाहितः ।

शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु तथा मानापमानयोः ॥ 6.7 ॥

(6.7) Who has conquered the Ātman (that is, his Internal Sense), and who has attained tranquility, his 'paramātmā' becomes samāhita (that is, equal and steady) towards heat and cold, pain and happiness, honour and dishonour.

[ In this stanza, the word 'paramātmān' has been used with reference to the Ātman itself. The Ātman within the body is ordinarily engrossed in the turmoil of pain and happiness; but, when this turmoil has been conquered by means of control of the senses, the same Ātman acquires the form of a 'paramātmān', or of the 'parameśvara'. It is stated further on in the Gītā itself (Gī. 13.22 and 31) that the Paramātmān is not some substance, different in nature from the Ātman, but that the Ātman within the body of a man is essentially the Paramātmān; and even in the Mahābhārata, there is a statement that –

ātmā kṣetrajña ity uktaḥ saṁyuktaṁ prakṛtair guṇaiḥ ।  
tair eva tu vinirmuktaḥ paramātmety udāhṛtaḥ ॥ (Ma.  
Bhā. Śān. 187: 24),

that is, "when the Ātman is prākṛta , that is, bound by the constituents of Prakṛti (by emotions, such as, happiness, pain etc.), it is called the 'kṣetrajña' or the 'Jīvātman', within the body; and when it has become free, from -these constituents, the same Ātman is called the Paramātmān". It will be seen from Chapter IX of the Gītā-Rahasya, that the same is the doctrine of the Non-Dualistic Vedānta. Those who are of opinion that the Gītā does not support Non-Dualism, but supports Qualified Monism (viśiṣṭādvaita), or pure Dualism, do not take the word 'paramātmā' here as a single word, but

break it up into 'param' and ' ātma ', and look upon the word 'param' as an adverb qualifying the verb 'samāhitaḥ'. This, interpretation is far-fetched; but it will show how commentators, who want to establish a particular doctrine, stretch the meaning of the Gītā to support their own point of view.]

ज्ञानविज्ञानतृप्तात्मा कूटस्थो विजितेन्द्रियः ।

युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ॥ 6.8 ॥

(6.8) He, whose Ātman has become satisfied by jñāna (that is, Spiritual Knowledge ~Translator.) and by vijñāna, [that is, by specified (vividha) Jñāna], who has conquered his senses, who has become 'kūṭastha' (that is, who has reached the origin), and has begun to look upon the earth, . stone, and gold as one and the same, such a (Karma-) Yogin (alone)

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is said to be 'yukta' (that is, to have reached the siddhāvasthā).

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु ।

साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते ॥ 6.9 ॥

(6.9) That man, whose Reason has become equal towards dear persons, friends, enemies, udāsīnas, madhyasthas, persons fit to be hated, and brethren, as also towards saints, and evil-minded persons, may be said to be of special worth.



['suhṛd ' means a friend, who helps without expecting a return; 'udāsina' is a person, who, where there are two factions, does not desire the good or the evil of either party; . 'madhyastha' is a person, who wishes well by both sides; and 'bandhu' is a relation. Such are the meanings given by commentators to these words. But it will do, if slightly different meanings are taken instead of taking these meanings; because, these words have not been used with the intention of showing a different meaning in each case; and several words are sometimes used in this way in order that an exhaustive meaning may be conveyed by the combination, and that nothing should be left over. In this way, after having briefly explained who-may be called a 'yogī', or a ' yukta', or a ' yogārūḍha" (Gī. 2.61; 4.18; and 5.23), the Blessed Lord has also said' that every man is free to achieve this Karma-Yoga for himself; and that it is not necessary for him to depend for assistance on anybody else for that purpose. The Blessed Lord now explains the means for achieving this; Karma-Yoga –]

॥ योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः ।

एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः ॥ 6.10 ॥

(6.10) He, who is a Yogin (that is, a Karma-Yogin) should, remaining alone in solitude; controlling his Mind, and his-Ātman; not entertaining any desire whatsoever; and giving up parigraha (that is, bonds), take constantly to his Yoga-practice. [ It becomes clear from the next stanza that the word 'yuñjīta' refers to the Yoga described in the Pātañjala—

sutras. But, this does not mean that the man, who wishes to achieve the Karma-Yoga must spend his entire life in the practice of the Pātañjala-Yoga. The Pātañjala-Yoga has been described in this chapter as a means for acquiring that Equable Reason, which is necessary in the Karma-Yoga; and solitude is necessary only to that extent. As a result of Prakṛti, many persons are not able to acquire in one life the Mental Absorption (samādhi) described in the Pātañjala-Yoga; and the Blessed Lord has said at the end of this very chapter, that such persons should practise the Karma-Yoga by steadying their Reason, as far as possible, instead of wasting their whole life in the practice of Pātañjala-Yoga; and that by doing so, they will ultimately attain Perfection (siddhi) after many births (Gī. Ra. Ch. X, pp.389 to 390)–]

शुचौ देशे प्रतिष्ठाप्य स्थिरमासनमात्मनः ।

नात्युच्छ्रितं नातिनीचं चैलाजिनकुशोत्तरम् ॥ 6.11 ॥

तत्रैकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।

उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्याद्योगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥ 6.12 ॥

समं कायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्नचलं स्थिरः ।

सम्प्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन् ॥ 6.13 ॥

(6.11) Having unchangeably fixed one's 'āsana' (that is, place of sitting ~Translator.) on dried grass, covered by a deer-skin, over which too has been placed a piece of cloth, neither too high nor too low, in a pure place,

(6.12) and controlling in that place the activities of the [1] Mental Vision (i.e., citta ~Translator.) and of the senses, and concentrating the Mind, one should practice Yoga, sitting on that seat, for self-purification.

(6.13) Becoming steady, holding the kaya (that is, the back), the head, and the neck fixedly in a vertical straight line, not looking towards the cardinal directions (that is, around oneself), and fixing the, gaze on the tip of

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one's nose,

प्रशान्तात्मा विगतभीर्ब्रह्मचारिव्रते स्थितः ।

मनः संयम्य मच्चित्तो युक्त आसीत मत्परः ॥ 6.14 ॥

(6.14) not entertaining any fear, keeping a peaceful frame of mind, observing brahmacharya (that is,. celibacy~Translator.), controlling the Mind, fixing one's Mental Vision on Me, becoming devoted to Me, one should become yukta (i.e., 'steeped in Yoga' ~Translator.)

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[1] See, Apte, Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary, 1924, p.435.  
~Translator.

[The words " in a pure place" and "holding the back, neck, and the head fixedly in a vertical straight line " are from the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad (see Śve. 2.8 and 10); and the whole of the description given above is not from the Haṭha-Yoga, but is more consistent with the description of Yoga given in the ancient Upaniṣads. In the Haṭha-Yoga, there is a coercive control of the senses; but it is stated later on in the 24th stanza of this very chapter, that " the senses should be controlled by the Mind " Cf. "manasaiva indriyagrāmaṁ viniyamya". This clearly shows that the Gītā does not countenance the Haṭha-Yoga. Similarly, it has been stated at the end of this chapter, that this description is not to be understood as directing a person to spend his whole life in the practice of Yoga. The Blessed Lord now further expounds the concrete results of this Yoga-practice –]

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी नियतमानसः ।

शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति ॥ 6.15 ॥

(6.15) By thus continually practising the Yoga, the Mind! comes under control; and the (Karma-) Yogin attains the. tranquility, to be found in Me, and which is ultimately productive of 'nirvana' (that is, which causes assimilation, into Me).

[The word 'continually' in this stanza is not to be taken as meaning for twenty-four hours a day. All that is meant is, that one should perform this practice, for a few hours every day (see commentary on stanza 10). The –'reason for saying:

"become 'maccitta' and 'matparāyaṇa' while thus practising Yoga", is that the Pātañjala-Yoga is

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only one of the devices or processes for controlling the Mind. When the Mind has been controlled by this practice, it is possible to fix it on other things instead of on the Blessed Lord. Therefore, the Gītā says that, (i) one should not thus misapply the concentrated Mind, but should' utilise this concentration or 'samādhi' of the Mind, for acquiring the Knowledge of the form of the Parameśvara; chat, (ii) it is only when this is done that Yoga becomes beneficial; and that, (iii) otherwise, the practice is only productive of useless trouble; and the same meaning is conveyed later on in the 29th and 30th stanzas, and again in the 47th stanza at the end of the chapter. Those, who have only practised the physical control of, or acquired the Yoga of, the organs, without being devoted to the Parameśvara, only become adept in such practices, as 'jāraṇa' (incantations to produce impotency, diseases, or infirmities), 'māraṇa' (incantations to destroy or kill), 'vaśīkaraṇa' (incantations for fascinating or enchanting and subduing), which are harmful to others. This state of things is not desirable either for the Gītā or for any other path of Release. The Blessed Lord now gives again a further elucidation of this Yoga-practice –]

नात्यश्नतस्तु योगोऽस्ति न चैकान्तमनश्नतः ।

न चाति स्वप्नशीलस्य जाग्रतो नैव चार्जुन ॥ 6.16 ॥

युक्ताहारविहारस्य युक्तचेष्टस्य कर्मसु ।

युक्तस्वप्नावबोधस्य योगो भवति दुःखहा ॥ 6.17 ॥

(6.16) O Arjuna! he who eats too much, or who eats nothing; at all, and he who sleeps too much, or who keeps awake too much cannot succeed in (this) Yoga.

(6.17) Whose food and pastime are moderate, whose Action is just sufficient, and whose sleep and keeping awake are measured, to him, (this) Yoga becomes a destroyer of pain (that is, a producer of happiness).

[In this stanza, the word 'yoga' means the practice of the Pātañjala-Yoga; and the word 'yukta' means, moderate, enough, or measured; and further on also, in one or two places the word 'yoga' has been used to mean

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Pātañjala-Yoga. Nevertheless, it does not, on that account, follow that this chapter deals independently with the Pātañjala-Yoga. It has been clearly stated in the foregoing lines that one's most important duty in life is to successfully practise the Karma-Yoga; and that this description of the Pātañjala-Yoga has been given as being a means for attaining that Karma-Yoga, and for that purpose only; and it becomes clear

from the words "whose Action is just sufficient", that this Yoga-practice has to be carried on, without giving up other Action. The Blessed Lord now first gives a short description of a Yogin, and describes the nature of the happiness of mental absorption (samādhī) –]

§§ यदा विनियतं चित्तमात्मन्येवावतिष्ठते ।

निःस्पृहः सर्वकामेभ्यो युक्त इत्युच्यते तदा ॥ 6.18 ॥

यथा दीपो निवातस्थो नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता ।

योगिनो यतचित्तस्य युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः ॥ 6.19 ॥

(6.18) When the controlled Mind becomes fixed on the Ātman, and when there does not remain the desire for any enjoyment, the man is said to have become 'yukta'.

(6.19) Just as a lamp (that is, the flame of a lamp) kept in a breeze-less place, remains unflickering, that same simile is applied to the Yogin, who practices Yoga, having controlled the Mind.

[Besides this simile, there are other similes in the Mahābhārata, such as, " the mind of a Yogin becomes 'yukta', just as a man becomes 'yukta' (concentrated) when taking a utensil filled with oil down a stair-case, or when protecting a boat in a storm (Śānti. 300. 31, 34). The simile in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad of the charioteer and the horses of the chariot, is well-known; and although that simile has not been clearly used in the Gītā, yet, the 67th and 68th stanzas of the second chapter, and the 25th stanza of this chapter, have clearly been

written with that simile in mind. Although the word 'yoga' has the technical meaning of "Karma-Yoga" in the Gītā, yet, that word has been used in various other meanings in the Gītā; for instance, in 9.5 and 10.7, the word 'yoga' has been used, to mean "the

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power to do something supernatural, or whatever is desired". Nay, as the word 'yoga' has several meanings, the supporters of the Pātañjala-Yoga, or of the Sāṃkhya-Yoga, have found an opportunity of making use of that fact for saying that the Gītā supports their respective doctrines. The Blessed Lord now describes in a more exhaustive manner the 'samadhi' in the shape of 'total control of the Mental Vision' prescribed by the Pātañjala-Yoga –]

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।

यत्र चैवात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति ॥ 6.20 ॥

सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद् बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम् ।

वेत्ति यत्र न चैवायं स्थितश्चलति तत्त्वतः ॥ 6.21 ॥

यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः ।

यस्मिन्स्थितो न दुःखेन गुरुणापि विचाल्यते ॥ 6.22 ॥

तं विद्याद्दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् ।

स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा ॥ 6.23 ॥



(6.20) That state in which the Mind remains entranced after it has become controlled by Yoga-practice, and seeing one's Ātman in which, one remains contented in the Ātman itself;

(6.21) j in which It experiences that summit of happiness, which is only Mind-Realised c, buddhigamya) and imperceptible to the senses; and, having (once) become steady in which, It does not swerve from the 'tattva' (that is, principle ~Translator.);

(6.22) similarly, having acquired which state, It does not consider any other attainment as greater, and having become steady in which, no pain, however big can move (It) therefrom;

(6.23) that state is known as the "viyoga" (i.e., disunion ~Translator.) from the contact of pain", that is, as 'yoga'; and this 'Yoga' must be practised determinedly, without allowing the Mind to get tired.

[These four stanzas make one sentence. The demonstrative pronoun "to him" ('taṁ'), used at the beginning of the 23rd stanza, refers to the description given in the first three stanzas; and the four stanzas complete the

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description of the 'samādhi'. The words used in the beginning of the 20th stanza are similar to the description of 'Yoga' as, "yogaś cittavṛttinirodhaḥ", that is, "Yoga means the control of

the activities of the Mental Vision (citta) " given in the Pātañjala-Yoga-Sūtras. The 'samādhi' is the culmination of this control of the activities of the Mental vision; and that is called 'Yoga': this is the new definition of the word 'yoga', which has now been intentionally given. It has been stated in the Upaniṣads and in the Mahābhārata, that a determined and industrious man can accomplish this Yoga in six months (Maitryu. 6. 28; Amṛtanāda. 29; Ma. Bhā. Aśva. Anugītā, 19.66). Nevertheless, it has been stated above in the 20th stanza, and later on also in the 28th stanza, that this happiness, arising out of the samadhi of the Pātañjala-Yoga, is not the result . merely of the control of the activities of the Mind, but arises after one has become acquainted with the nature of the Ātman, after having controlled the activities of the Mind. This painless condition is known as 'brahmānanda' (the Brāhmic bliss), or, 'ātmaprasādaja happiness' (the happiness resulting from the Realisation of the Ātman), or, 'ātmānanda' (the Ātmic bliss), (Gī. 18.37, and Gī. Ra. Ch. IX, p.320). It is not that this Equability of the Mind, necessary for acquiring the Knowledge of the Ātman, can be acquired only by the Pātañjala-Yoga; and it is stated in the following chapters that the same result, namely, the purification of the Mind, can also be achieved by means of Knowledge (jñāna) and Devotion (bhakti); and, that course is usually considered more proper and easier. The Blessed Lord has thus given a description of the samādhi; He now explains how that samadhi is to be brought about –] .

§§ संकल्पप्रभवान्कामांस्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानशेषतः ।

मनसैवेन्द्रियग्रामं विनियम्य समन्ततः ॥ 6.24 ॥

शनैः शनैरुपरमेद्बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।

आत्मसंस्थं मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥ 6.25 ॥

(6.24) Abandoning all the kāma (that is, wishes) arising out of saṁkalpa (that is, imagination ~Translator.), and controlling the senses on all sides by the Mind,

(6.25) you should gradually

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become tranquil, with a courageous Mind; and steadying the Mind on the Ātman, you should allow no thought to enter the Mind.

§§ यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।

ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥ 6.26 ॥

(6.26) (while you are concentrating the Mental Vision in this fashion) Controlling the volatile and unsteady Mind in every direction, from which it may seek to escape, you should bring it within the control of the Ātman.

[The description of this process of attaining the samādhi (absorption) of the Mind is well-exemplified by the illustration of a chariot given in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad (Kaṭha. 1.3.3). Just as

the skilful charioteer takes the horses along a straight road, without allowing them to rush in this direction or that, the same kind of effort has a man to make in order to attain samādhī. He, who is accustomed to concentrate his mind on any particular subject, will easily understand the meaning underlying this stanza. When the Mind is controlled in one direction, it breaks out in another direction; and unless this is stopped, it is not possible to attain samādhī. The Blessed Lord now describes the result which can be obtained by controlling the Mind in this way—]

§§ प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम् ।

उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् ॥ 6.27 ॥

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्मषः ।

सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते ॥ 6.28 ॥

(6.27) The (Karma-)Yogin, who is thus peaceful-minded, devoid of the rajas quality, sinless, and brahma-bhūta, attains the highest kind of bliss.

(6.28) The (Karma-) Yogin, who continually practises Yoga in this fashion, becomes liberated from all sins, and happily enjoys the beatific happiness arising from brahma-saṁyoga (i.e., union with the Brahman ~Translator.).

[I have interpreted the word 'yogī', in these two stanzas, as meaning 'Karma-Yogin'; because, as the Pātañjala-Yoga has been mentioned as one of the means for attaining

the Karma-Yoga, such a man who practises the Pātañjala-Yoga must be a Karma-Yogin. Nevertheless, it will do if the word 'yogī' is taken to mean a person, who is in samādhī. It must not, however, be forgotten that the course of conduct advocated by the Gītā is beyond this. The same argument is advanced in the next two or three .stanzas. The Blessed Lord now describes the Self-Identifying (ātmaupamya) vision towards the entire creation, acquired after a man has in this way experienced the happiness of the nirvana (Absolute) Brahman –j

§§ सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।

ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥ 6.29 ॥

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।

तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥ 6.30 ॥

(6.29) Whose Ātman has (thus) become yoga-yukta (i.e., steeped in Yoga ~Translator.), his vision becomes equalised in all directions, and he sees himself in all things, and sees (that) all created things (are) within himself.

(6.30) Who: sees Me (the Parameśvara, Paramātmān), (to be) everywhere, and who sees everything, within Me, him, I never abandon; nor does he ever abandon Me.

[ The description in the first out of these two stanzas, where the word 'ātman' has been used, is from the imperceptible, that is, the metaphysical point of view; and the second description, where the first personal pronoun ' I ' has been used, is from the perceptible, that is, the devotional point .of view. But both these things mean the same (Gī. Ra. Ch. XIII, pp.598 to 605). This vision of the identification of the Brahman with the Ātman, is the foundation both of Release and of Karma-Yoga. The first part of the 29th stanza has appeared with a slight difference in the Manu-Smṛti (Manu. 12.91), in the Mahābhārata (Śān. 238.21 and 268.22), and also in the Upaniṣads (Kaiva. 1.10; and Īśā. 6). Nay, the realisation of the identity of the entire creation with the Ātman is the origin of all Metaphysics and of Karma-Yoga, as has been shown by me at great

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length in Chapter XII of the Gītā-Rahasya (see p.537 etc.). Although a man may have obtained control over the senses, such control is useless in the absence of this Jñāna; and therefore, the Blessed Lord starts from the next chapter to speak about the Knowledge of the Parameśvara.]

सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः ।

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते ॥ 6.31 ॥

आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।

सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥ 6.32 ॥

(6.31) He, who worships Me (the Parameśvara), Who pervade every created thing, keeping in mind the idea of Unity, (that: is, of the Identity of the Ātman with all created things), that Karma-Yogin, though he may be acting in all manner, is in. Me.

(6.32) O Arjuna! that (Karma-) Yogin, who has begun to look everywhere with a (Self-Identifying-) Vision according to which, others are the same as himself, such a man is . considered parama (that is, most superior).

[The idea, that there is only one Ātman in the entire creation, is common to the Sāṃkhya-mārga as also to the Yoga-mārga; in the same way, even according to the Pātañjala-Yoga, this Equability is attained after a man has Realised the Parameśvara. But as both the Sāṃkhya-Yogins and the Pātañjala-Yogins support the: Abandonment of Action, they never make occasion for utilising in actual life this feeling of Equability; and the Karma-Yogin of the Gītā , on the contrary, continually utilises in everyday life this Equability of Reason, acquired by Metaphysical Realisation, and goes on performing all the different affairs of the world for Universal Welfare: this is the great difference between the two; and, that is why it is stated at the end of this chapter, that the Karma-Yogin is superior to the 'tapasvin', (that is, the Pātañjala-Yogin) on the one hand, and the 'jñānin' (that is, the Sāṃkhya-Yogin) on the

other hand (stanza 46). Having heard this-description of the Yoga of Equability, Arjuna now raises . the following doubt-]

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अर्जुन उवाच

§§ योऽयं योगस्त्वया प्रोक्तः साम्येन मधुसूदन ।

एतस्याहं न पश्यामि चञ्चलत्वात्स्थितिं स्थिराम् ॥ 6.33 ॥

चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम् ।

तस्याहं निग्रहं मन्ये वायोरिव सुदुष्करम् ॥ 6.34 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(6.33), O Madhusūdana, I do not think that this Yoga (that is, Karma-Yoga), acquired by sām̐ya (that is, by Equability of Reason), which You have preached will last permanently, having regard to the inconstancy (of the Mind);

(6.34) because, Kṛṣṇa! the Mind is volatile, rebellious, powerful, and dṛḍha (that is, difficult to mould); I think that the control of it is as difficult as of the wind, (that is, as trying to bind the wind in an envelope)..

[The word 'yoga' in the 33rd stanza must be taken as meaning 'Karma-Yoga'; because, it is qualified by the adjective 'by means of sām̐ya', that is, 'by means of Equability of Reason'. Although the samādhi according to the Pātañjala-Yoga has been described in the foregoing lines, yet, the Pātañjala-Yoga



is not meant by the word "yoga" in these stanzas; because, in Chapter II, the Blessed Lord has Himself defined Karma-Yoga as: "samatvam yoga uccyate" (2.48), that is, "Equality of Reason, or Equability, is known as 'Yoga'". The Blessed Lord admits the correctness of the doubt of Arjuna and says –]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

असंशयं महाबाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।

अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥ 6.35 ॥

असंयतात्मना योगो दुष्प्राप इति मे मतिः ।

वश्यात्मना तु यतता शक्योऽवाप्तुमुपायतः ॥ 6.36 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(6.35) O Mighty-armed Arjuna, there is not the slightest doubt that the Mind is volatile, and that controlling it, is difficult; but, O Kaunteya, it can be kept under control by abhyāsa (that is, by practice ~Translator.), and by vairagya (that is, absence of Desire ~Translator.).

(36) That man whose Inner Sense (antaḥkaraṇa) is not within control,

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for him, it will be difficult in My opinion to achieve this Yoga (of Equable Reason); but, if one makes the effort, after controlling the Inner Sense, it is possible to acquire this Yoga.

[ In short, that which appears difficult in the beginning can ultimately be achieved by practice and by industry. 'abhyāsa' means 'doing any particular thing over and over again'; and 'vairagya' means "absence of 'rāga' or of 'love'", that is to say, "absence of desire". In the Pātañjala-Yoga-Sūtras, after first describing the nature of Yoga, as "yogaś cittavṛttinirodhaḥ", that is, "controlling the activities of the Mental Vision is Yoga", (see the 20th stanza of this Chapter), it is stated in the next sutra that "abhyāsa vairāgyābhyāṁ tan nirodhaḥ", that is, "Mental Vision is controlled by practice and by indifference to the world". The same words have been used in the Gītā, and the meaning is the same; but it cannot be stated, on that account, that, these words have been taken from the Pātañjala-Sūtras

(See Gī. Ra. pp.746 – 747). Although it is thus possible to attain samādhi (mental absorption) in this way, by controlling the Mind, and although it might be possible for some determined persons to acquire it by practice in six months, yet, another difficulty now arises, to the following effect, namely, this highest stage of the Karma-Yoga cannot be acquired by many people even after several births, as a result of their inherent nature. How are such people to attain this Perfection? Because, even if such a person begins to practise Karma-Yoga, in one life, after having practised the control of the senses as far as possible, yet, that practice is bound to remain incomplete at the moment of his death; and if in the, next

birth, he is to start over again from the beginning, the same thing will be repeated in his next birth. Therefore, the next question: of Arjuna is as to what such persons should

अर्जुन उवाच

§§ अयतिः श्रद्धयोपेतो योगाच्चलितमानसः ।

अप्राप्य योगसंसिद्धिं कां गतिं कृष्ण गच्छति ॥ 6.37 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(6.37) O Kṛṣṇa! what state is attained by

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a man, instead of acquiring success in Yoga, who has. Faith, but whose Mind, on account of his being ayati (that is, wanting in sufficient effort, or sufficient control, as a result of his natural proclivities), has moved from the (Karma-) Yoga, (consisting of an Equable Reason)?

कच्चिन्नोभयविभ्रष्टश्छिन्नाभ्रमिव नश्यति ।

अप्रतिष्ठो महाबाहो विमूढो ब्रह्मणः पथि ॥ 6.38 ॥

एतन्मे संशयं कृष्ण छेत्तुमर्हस्यशेषतः ।

त्वदन्यः संशयस्यास्य छेत्ता न ह्युपपद्यते ॥ 6.39 ॥

(6.38) O Mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa! is such a man, who, being encompassed by Ignorance, and not having become steady in the path of attaining the Brahman, has become bhraṣṭa (that

is, alienated) from both sides, ruined (in the middle) like a broken cloud?"

(6.39) O Kṛṣṇa! You it is, Who must remove this doubt in. my mind; because, no one other than You will begot for removing this doubt.

[Though in the nañ-samāsa, the prefixed nañ (i.e., a) is commonly taken to mean 'absence of', yet, as it is very, often also used to denote dimunity, the word 'ayati' in the. 37th stanza has to be interpreted as meaning, 'one who makes little, that is, insufficient effort or control'. The words "alienated from both sides" that is, "ito bhraṣṭas tato bhraṣṭaḥ" used in the 38th stanza must be taken to. refer to the Karma-Yoga. If Action is performed according to the directions of the Śāstras, though desirefully, one obtains heaven; and if it is performed with a Desireless-Reason, one , obtains Release, without being bound by the Action; these are the two results of Karma; but, this man, who is neither here nor there, does not get the Desire-borne Fruit in the shape of heaven, etc., because, that has not been his motive; and cannot also attain Release, as he has. not acquired Equability of Reason. Arjuna's question is whether, in this way, heaven is lost and Release is also lost-to him; whether, ghee is. lost to him, as also the oil, and

there remains in his hands the empty vessel [1], like a person-abandoned by both sides. It is not that this question applies only to the means, for the acquisition of the Karma-Yoga in the shape of the practice of Pātañjala-Yoga. It has been stated in the following chapters, that the Equability of Reason necessary for Karma-Yoga can be acquired either by the Pātañjala-Yoga, or by Devotion, or by Knowledge; and just as the means in the shape of Pātañjala-Yoga are likely to remain incomplete in one life, so also are the means in the shape of Devotion, or of Knowledge, –if those paths are followed, –also likely to remain incomplete in one life. Therefore, the reply given by the Blessed Lord to this question of Arjuna may be said to apply equally to all the various means in the path of Karma-Yoga.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।

न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद्दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥ 6.40 ॥

प्राप्य पुण्यकृतां लोकानुषित्वा शाश्वतीः समाः ।

शुचीनां श्रीमतां गेहे योगभ्रष्टोऽभिजायते ॥ 6.41 ॥

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[1] This is a reference to the story of a fool, who went to buy clarified butter, as also oil, with a vessel (usually used for burning incense), which has openings on both sides and a partition in the middle, and who, putting the clarified butter on one side inverted the vessel to put the oil in on the other side, and thus lost the clarified butter: and then lost the oil also, in inverting the vessel-again, to see what had become of the clarified butter. ~Translator.

अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमताम् ।

एतद्धि दुर्लभतरं लोके जन्म यदीदृशम् ॥ 6.42 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(6.40) O Pārtha! such a man does not come to grief, whether in this world or in the next; because, my friend, no man, who performs beneficial Actions, ever reaches an unhappy end.

(6.41) This Yoga-bhraṣṭa (that is, this man, who has fallen from the Path of Karma-Yoga), takes (re-) birth in the family of pure-minded rich people, after reaching the spheres (like heaven, etc.), which are attained by people, who perform good Actions, and (after) having remained there for many years;

(6.42) or, he is

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torn in the family of intelligent (Karma-) Yogins; such (re-) births are very rare in (this) world.

तत्र तं बुद्धिसंयोगं लभते पौर्वदिहिकम् ।

यतते च ततो भूयः संसिद्धौ कुरुनन्दन ॥ 6.43 ॥

पूर्वाभ्यासेन तेनैव हियते ह्यवशोऽपि सः ।

जिज्ञासुरपि योगस्य शब्दब्रह्मातिवर्तते ॥ 6.44 ॥

(6.43) The spiritual impressions acquired in the previous births, come to him again here (that is, in the birth which he has thus

acquired); and, O Kurunandana! he attempts to acquire success (in Yoga), which is 'bhūyaḥ' (that is, even higher).

(6.44) As a result of that practice, made by him in the previous births, he is necessarily (that is, though he may not wish it) drawn (towards complete siddhi). He, who has experienced the jijñāsā (that is, the desire to possess the knowledge) of (Karma-) Yoga, such a man also goes beyond the śabda-brahma (that is, the desire-prompted ritual, such as, Yajñas, Yāgas, etc., prescribed by the Vedas. ~Translator.).

प्रयत्नाद्यतमानस्तु योगी संशुद्धकिल्बिषः ।

अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥ 6.45 ॥

(6.45) Becoming absolved of sin, while (thus) practising industriously, the (Karma-) Yogin, acquires success, after many births, and reaches a most superior state.

[The words 'yoga', 'yoga-bhraṣṭa' and 'yogī' in these stanzas have been used as meaning 'Karma-Yoga', 'one who has fallen from the Karma-Yoga' and 'Karma-Yogin', respectively; because, being born in a rich family cannot be proper for anyone else. The Blessed Lord says that one should start the practice of the Karma-Yoga with as much pure-mindedness as possible in the beginning. Whatever Action is performed in this way, however little it be, that will gradually bring more and more of success; and in the next life, if not in this life, it will ultimately lead to Release. The stanzas, "if this 'course of conduct' ('dharma') is observed even to a small extent, it saves

a person from the great danger " (Gī. 2.40), and " one reaches .Vāsudeva after many births" (Gī. 7.19) further

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support this proposition. For further discussion on this subject, see pp.389 – 395 of Chapter X of the Gītā-Rahasya. The word 'śabda-brahma' used in the 44th stanza means 'desire-prompted ritual, such as, Yajñas and Yāgas, prescribed by the Vedas'; because, that ritual is enjoined by the Vedas; and it is performed, keeping faith in the Vedas; and the 'Veda' is the 'śabda' (word), that is, the 'śabda-brahma', which was in existence before the entire creation came into existence. Any person whosoever performs all Actions with .some desire in the first instance; but, as the Mind is gradually purified by the performance of such Action, he gradually acquires the inspiration of performing Action desirelessly. That is why it is stated in the Upaniṣads, as .also in the Mahābhārata that:

dve brahmaṇī veditavye śabda-brahma param ca yat ।

śabda-brahmaṇi niṣṇātaḥ param brahmādhigacchati ॥

that is, "it must be understood that the Brahman is of two kinds, namely, the śabda-brahma, and the other (that is, nirguṇa-brahma) beyond it; when a person has become well-versed in the śabda-brahma, he reaches the nirguṇa-brahma, which is beyond it" (Maitryu. 6. 22; Amṛtabindu, 17; Ma. Bhā.



Śān. 231.63; 269.1). Getting tired of the desire-prompted ritual prescribed by the śabda-brahma (that is, the Vedas), the man gets the desire to practise the Karma-Yoga, which prescribes the same Actions, but for Universal Welfare; and in this way, this Desireless Karma-Yoga is for the first time practised to a certain extent. Later on, according to the rule "svalpārambhaḥ kṣemakaraḥ", this little practice slowly drags the man more and more forward by gradual degrees; and, ultimately gives him complete Release, This is the meaning of the words, "who has experienced the desire to possess the knowledge of Karma-Yoga, such a man also goes beyond the śabda-brahma", which appear in the 44th stanza; because, such a desire, or 'jijñāsā', is the mouth of the grinding-mill in the shape of Karma-Yoga; and once one gets into this mill, then, either in this life or in the next, and sometime or other, one cannot but get complete success, and reach the (nirguṇa) Brahman, which is beyond the śabda-brahma. It would

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appear at the first sight that Janaka and others acquired this success in one life; but, considering the matter scientifically, those persons also must have acquired that fruit as a result of the spiritual training acquired in many previous births. In as practising Karma-Yoga, even to a small extent, nay, and, also as one undoubtedly acquires Release by means of it, the Blessed Lord now says to Arjuna as follows –]

§§ तपस्विभ्योऽधिको योगी ज्ञानिभ्योऽपि मतोऽधिकः ।

कर्मिभ्यश्चाधिको योगी तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन ॥ 6.46 ॥

(6.46) The (Karma-) Yogin is superior to the tapasvin; he is also superior to the jñānin, and also superior to the karmin; tasmāt, (that is, therefore, ~Translator.), O Arjuna! Do you become a Yogin (that is, Karma-Yogin)

[The meaning of the word 'tapasvin' in the stanza is, 'one, who, going into the forest, performs fasts and other body-tiring practices, or other devices of the Hatha-Yoga, and obtains Release'; and, that is also the meaning of that word in common parlance. 'jñānins' means naturally that 'sāṃkhya - niṣṭha' person, who is described by the words 'jñānayogena sāṃkhyānām' etc. (Gi. 3.3); and who, by means of 'jñāna', that is, by the Sāṃkhya path, abandons Action, and obtains Release. In the same way, 'karmin' means that orthodox ritual-practiser of the Mīmāṃsā school, who aspires to heaven, and performs only desire-prompted ritual, and who is described in Gi. 2.42 – 44, and 9.20, 21. Persons in each of these paths of life say that Release is obtained only by the path of life followed by them respectively; but the Gītā says that the Karma-Yogin, and necessarily the path of life known as 'Karma-Yoga', is superior whether to tapasvin, or the Mīmāṃsaka, or the Jñānin; and the same proposition has been enunciated before in the words "Action is better than Inaction" (Gi. 3.8); and "Karma-Yoga is better than Karma-Saṃnyāsa" etc. (Gi. 5.2); and in other stanzas

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(see Gita-Rahasya, Ch. XI, pp.424 – 426). Nay, the Karma-Yogin is superior even to the tapasvin, or the Mīmāṃsaka, or the Jñānin; and, that is why the Blessed Lord has, in the stanza 46, again clearly advised Arjuna that: "do you become a (Karma-) Yogin"; in the same way as He has Advised Arjuna above to: "perform Action, being yogastha" (Gi. 2.48; Gi. Ra. pp. 78 – 79); or, "arise, taking shelter in Yoga" (Gi. 4.42). Again, if one does not thus consider the Karma-Yoga as the superior path, the word 'tasmāt' = 'therefore', in the sentence, "therefore, do you become a Yogin", will become meaningless; but, how will this proposition be palatable to the commentators of the Saṁnyāsa school? Therefore, they have twisted the meaning of the word 'jñānin', and interpreted it to mean "one who has acquired mere 'śabda-jñāna' or 'bookish knowledge'"; but this interpretation is purely doctrine-supporting. These commentators do not want to interpret the Gītā as saying that it considers the Jñāna-mārga, which gives up Karma, as inferior; because, thereby a slur is cast on the doctrine of their school. And, it is for this very reason, that they have perverted the meaning of the phrase "karmayogo viśiṣyate" (Gi. 5.2); but, as this matter has been fully considered by me in Chapter XI of the Gita-Rahasya (p.424 et. seq.), I shall not further discuss here the interpretation of this stanza given by me. In my opinion, it is unquestionable that the Karma-Yoga is absolutely

the best path of life according to the Gītā. The Blessed Lord now explains in the next stanza, the various degrees of superiority among Karma-Yogin—]

योगिनामपि सर्वेषां मद्भक्तेनान्तरात्मना ।

श्रद्धावान् भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः ॥ 6.47 ॥

(6.47) Nevertheless, he, among all (Karma-Yogins), who, fixing his mind on Me, worships Me devotedly, is considered by Me as the most superior yukta (that is, the most completely perfect Karma-Yogin).

[This purport of this stanza is that, when to Karma-Yogi is added the affection included in Devotion, that Yogin

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becomes the most beloved of the Blessed Lord, as when sugar is added to milk. It does not mean that Devotion is better than the Desireless Karma-Yoga; because, later on in Chapter XII, the Blessed Lord has Himself clearly stated that Renunciation of the Fruit of Action is better than. Meditation (dhyāna), (Gī. 12.22). It is one thing to say that the mixture of Devotion and of Desireless Action is-valuable, and it is quite another thing to say that the Desireless Karma-Yoga is useless, and that Devotion is-superior to it. The doctrine laid down by the Gītā, is of the first kind; and that laid down by the Bhāgavata-purana is . of the second kind. It has been stated in the first, and. again

in the last chapter of the Bhāgavata, after declaring that all kinds of kriyāyoga (ritual) are destructive of Spiritual Knowledge (see Bhāg. 1.5.34), that,

naiṣkarmyam apy acyuta bhāvavarjitam na śobhate  
jñānamalam nirañjanam ।

(Bhāg. 1. 5. 12 and 12. 12. 52),

that is, "even naiṣkarmya, i.e., 'Desireless Action' (Bhāg. 11.3. 46), does not seem good, is useless, without devotion to the Blessed Lord". This will show that as the entire bias of the writer of the Bhāgavata is on Devotion, he even goes beyond the Bhagavadgītā, when occasion arises. This Purāṇa came to be written in the belief that due stress was not laid on Devotion in the Mahābhārata, and necessarily, in the Gītā. Therefore, it is not a matter of surprise, if one finds in it statements similar to those above. But, what we have to see is the summary or the import of the Gītā, and not what the Bhāgavata says. The: occasion for writing, as also the time of writing, was different in each case; and, therefore, it is not possible to fully harmonise them with each other. This chapter has described the devices from the Pātāñjala-Yoga, which are part of the devices necessary for cultivating the Equability of Reason required in Karma-Yoga. Knowledge, and Devotion, are other such devices; and their description starts-from the next chapter.]

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ध्यानयोगो नाम षष्ठोऽध्यायः ॥ 6 ॥

Thus ends, the sixth chapter entitled DHYĀNA-YOGA in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman (that is, on the Karma-Yoga), in the Upaniṣad sung (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

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# CHAPTER VII – JÑĀKA-VIJÑĀNA YOGA.

सप्तमोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER VII.

[After having proved that the Karma-Yoga is as much productive of Release as the Sāṃkhya-mārga, and yet, independent and superior to it; and that even a little practice of this Yoga is not useless, the Blessed Lord has explained how to acquire the control of the senses necessary in that path of life. But, the control of the senses is a purely external Action, and the purpose for which this exercise of the senses is necessary, has not yet been considered. The Blessed Lord had already explained to Arjuna in the third chapter that, enemies like Desire, Anger etc. fix their abode in the senses, and destroy both Spiritual Knowledge (jñāna) and Specified Knowledge (vijñāna), and that he should, therefore, first control the senses and destroy these enemies; and He had thus shown the necessity for the control of the senses; and He has also described the Yoga-yukta person in the last chapter as one who, after having controlled the senses, "has become satisfied by Jñāna and vijñāna" (6.8), and "sees the

Parameśvara in all created beings, and all created beings in the Parameśvara" (6.29). Therefore, as He has explained to Arjuna what is meant by the control of the senses, it has become necessary for Him, as a matter of course, to also explain to him what is 'Jñāna' and what is 'Vijñāna', as also the methods (vidhi) of the Karma-Yoga, by which one can acquire the complete Knowledge of the Parameśvara, without abandoning Action, and ultimately attain Release with certainty; and this same subject has been explained in the eleven chapters of the Gītā from the seventh chapter to the end of the seventeenth chapter; and in the last, that is, in the 18th chapter of the Gītā, a summary of the Karma-Yoga has been made. Realising that there is only One Indestructible Parameśvara, Who pervades all the various perishable things which fill the world, is known as 'Jñāna'; and understanding in what way the various perishable things come into existence out of one permanent

p.1011.

Parameśvara, is known as 'Vijñāna' (Gī. 13.30); and this is also known as 'kṣarākṣara-vicāra' (the Consideration of the Mutable and the Immutable). But, in addition to this, one can also acquire the Knowledge of the form of the Parameśvara by understanding what is the nature of the Ātman or Self, to be found within the body or 'kṣetra' of every person. This method of consideration is called 'kṣetra-kṣetrajña-vicāra' that is, the, Consideration of the Body (kṣetra) and the Ātman (kṣetrajña).



Out of these, the Blessed Lord has first started the Consideration of the Mutable and the Immutable; and taken in hand the Consideration of the Body and the Ātman in Chapter XIII. But, although the Parameśvara may be One, He has two aspects from the point of view of Worship, namely, the Imperceptible (avyakta) one, which is realisable only by the Reason; and the Perceptible (vyakta) one, which is empirical, that is, which can be actually experienced. It is, therefore, necessary to explain, as a part of this subject-matter, how one can Realise the Parameśvara by means of Reason, as also how it is possible to Realise the Imperceptible, by worshipping the perceptible form, in the first instance, with Faith or Devotion. One should not, therefore, be surprised if this subject-matter has taken up eleven chapters. Besides, as both these paths of life automatically produce the control of the senses, simultaneously with the Knowledge of Parameśvara, the Path of Knowledge and the Path of Devotion are both considered, to be of greater value in the science of Release, than the Pātañjala-Yoga path. Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that all this exposition is a part of the justification of the Path of Karma-Yoga, and is not something independent. Therefore, the division of the Gītā into three parts, according to which the first six chapters deal with Karma, the next six chapters deal with Devotion and last six chapters deal with Knowledge, is not a scientifically correct division. Broadly speaking, all these three subjects have been dealt with in the Gītā; but they are

not independent, and have been dealt with as being parts of the Karma-Yoga, as has been explained by me in chapter

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XIV of the Gītā -Rahasya (pp.638 to 644). Therefore, instead of repeating the same subject-matter here, let us see how the Blessed Lord starts the 7th chapter—]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

§§ मय्यासक्तमनाः पार्थ योगं युञ्जन्मदाश्रयः ।

असंशयं समग्रं मां यथा ज्ञास्यसि तच्छृणु ॥ 7.1 ॥

ज्ञानं तेऽहं सविज्ञानमिदं वक्ष्याम्यशेषतः ।

यज्ज्ञात्वा नेह भूयोऽन्यज्ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते ॥ 7.2 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(7.1) O Pārtha! hear yathā (that is, in which manner or by what method) you will acquire complete and unquestionable knowledge of Me, while you are practising the Karma-Yoga, keeping your mind on Me, and taking shelter in Me.

(7.2) Leaving nothing in balance, I am explaining to you this 'Jñāna' together with 'Vijñāna', by knowing which, there remains no other thing in this, world to know.

[ From the words "taking shelter in Me" and specially the word 'Yoga' used in the first stanza, it becomes quite clear that the 'Jñāna' and 'Vijñāna' explained further on, has been explained,

not independently, but as a means for perfecting the Karma-Yoga, which has been described in the previous chapters (Gī. Ra. Ch. XIV, p.641). Not only in this stanza, but also in other places in the Gītā, the-words "mad yogam āśritaḥ" (Gī. 12.11) "mat paraḥ" (Gī. 18.57 and 11.55) have been used with reference to the Karma-Yoga; and therefore, there remains no doubt that the Yoga which the Gītā ordains for practice, after one has taken shelter in the Parameśvara, is the Karma-Yoga, which has been dealt with in the last six chapters. Some persons interpret the word 'vijñāna' as meaning the 'brahmajñāna (Knowledge of the Brahman), which is-acquired by experience', or the 'brahmasākṣātkāra'. But, as the knowledge of the Parameśvara is divided into-synthetic (samaṣṭirūpa) Knowledge, (that is, Jñāna), and. analytical (vyaṣṭirūpa) Knowledge, (that is, Vijñāna), I . think those are the two meanings, which are here conveyed

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by the words 'jñāna' and 'vijñāna' (See Gī. 13. 30 and 18. 20). The words "there remains no other thing in this world to know" in the second stanza, have been stated on the-authority of the Upaniṣads. In the Chāndogyaopaniṣad, the father of Śvetaketu, after asking him: "yena ... .. avijñātaṁ vijñātaṁ bhavati", that is, "what is That, by knowing Which, one can know everything", has explained to him that problem by saying: "yathā somyaikena mṛtṭpiṇḍena sarvaṁ mṛṇmayam

vijñātaṁ syād vācārambhaṇaṁ vikāro nāmadheyaṁ mṛttikety eva satyam" (Chān. 6.1.4). that is, "just as, after once knowing what is contained in a ball of clay, one knows that all earthenware articles are only different evolutes of clay, bearing different Names and Forms, and nothing else, so also after knowing the Brahman, nothing else remains to be known"; and evert in the Muṇḍakopaniṣad (Muṇ. 1.1.3), the first question is: "kasmin nu bhagavo vijñāte sarvam idaṁ vijñātaṁ bhavati", that is, "by knowing what, is knowledge of all other things acquired?" From this, it is clear that what is meant here is the Non-Dualistic Vedānta doctrine that, (i) when one has acquired the Jñāna and the Vijñāna of the Parameśvara, nothing else remains to be learnt in this world; because, the Fundamental Element of this world is only one; that, (ii) this Fundamental Element pervades everything in different Names and Forms; and that, (iii) there is no other thing besides it in the world. Otherwise, the statement made in the second stanza does not become intelligible.]

मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कश्चिद्यतति सिद्धये ।

यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ॥ 7.3 ॥

(7.3) Only some persons out of thousands make an attempt to—attain Perfection; and out of these (numerous) Perfect Beings, who make the attempt, only some gain true Knowledge of Me.

[ Though the persons who are making the attempt, are referred to as 'siddha-puruṣa' (Perfect Beings) in this place,

yet, it must be borne in mind that they attain 'siddhi' (Perfection) only after having acquired the Knowledge of

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the Parameśvara. The Blessed Lord now starts the Consideration of the Mutable and the Immutable, being one of the two sub-divisions of this Knowledge of the Parameśvara, namely, (i) the Consideration of the Mutable and the Immutable and (ii) the Consideration of the Body and the Ātman –]

§§ भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।

अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥ 7.4 ॥

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।

जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ॥ 7.5 ॥

एतद्योनीनि भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय ।

अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा ॥ 7.6 ॥

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किंचिदस्ति धनंजय ।

मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥ 7.7 ॥

(7.4) The earth, water, fire, air, and ether (these five subtle elements), the Mind, the Reason, and Individuation, this is My Prakṛti divided into-eight-divisions.

(7.5) This Prakṛti is 'aparā' (that is, of an inferior order). O Mahābāho, Arjuna, know that there is besides this, yet another Prakṛti of Mine, in the form, of Jīva, which is parā (that is superior), by which this world is maintained.

(7.6) Bear in mind that from both these, all created beings are created. I am the 'prabhava' (that is, the origin) and the 'pralaya' (that is, the end) of the entire Cosmos.

(7.7) Beyond Me, O Dhanañjaya, there is nothing else. Just as several beads are strung on a string, so is all this strung on Me.

[These four stanzas contain a summary of the science of the Mutable and the Immutable; and the same has been dealt with in extenso in the subsequent stanzas. The Sāṃkhya system says that (i) there are two independent Elements of the universe, namely, (a) the acetana (inanimate) or jaḍa (gross) Prakṛti (Matter) and (b) the 'sacetana' (conscious) Puruṣa (Spirit); and that, (ii) every-thing is created out of these two Elements. But, as the Gītā does not admit this Duality, it looks upon Prakṛti and Puruṣa, as two manifestations (vibhūti) of one and the same

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Parameśvara, of which Gross Matter (jaḍa prakṛti) is an inferior manifestation, and the 'Jīva' or 'Puruṣa' (that is, Spirit) is the superior one (See the 4th and 5th stanzas); and it further states that all moveable and immoveable creation is created

out of these two (Gī. 13.28). Out of these, the superior Prakṛti in the form of Jīva, considered as the Ātman (kṣetrajña), has been fully considered later on in the Chapter XIII. Then remains Gross Matter (jaḍa prakṛti). The Gītā does not look upon this as independent, but considers that the entire creation is created out of this Gross Matter, under the supervision of the Parameśvara (Gī. 9.10). Nevertheless, though the Gītā does not look upon Prakṛti as independent, yet, the divisions of Prakṛti according to the Sāṃkhya system have been accepted with minor differences by the Gītā (Gī. Ra. Chapter VIII, p.244 – 250); and the Gītā also accepts the Sāṃkhya theory of guṇotkarṣa regarding the subsequent creation of all things out of Prakṛti (Gī. Ra. Ch. IX, p.334 – 335), after Gross Matter has come into existence out of the Parameśvara (Gī. 7.14) as a result of Māyā. According to the Sāṃkhyas, Prakṛti and Puruṣa make up 25 Elements; out of these, Prakṛti gives rise to 23 Elements. Out of these twenty-three, the five Gross Elements, the ten senses, and the Mind, these 16, arise out of the remaining seven, that is, are Evolutes (vikāra) of those seven. Therefore, in considering the Fundamental Elements, these sixteen elements are left out of account; and when that is done, there remain only seven Elements as Fundamental Elements, . namely, the Reason (mahān), Individuation (ahaṃkāra) and the five Fine Elements (tanmātra). These seven have been named 'prakṛti-vikṛti' in the Sāṃkhya system, and these seven prakṛti-vikṛti and the Fundamental Prakṛti, now make up what is known as the

'Eight-fold Prakṛti'; and this known as the 'aṣṭadhā prakṛti' (that is, Eight-fold Prakṛti) in the Mahābhārata (Śān. 310.10 – 15). But the Gītā has not considered it proper to place the original Prakṛti in the same grade as the seven prakṛti-vikṛti; because, if that is done, the distinction that there is one Fundamental Prakṛti and that the remaining seven are its

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Involutes (vikāra) is not shown. Therefore, there is a difference between the classification in the Mahābhārata and the classification in the Gītā, according to which latter, the seven prakṛti-vikṛti and the Mind make up the fundamental eight-fold Prakṛti (Gī. Ra. p.249). In short, it must be borne in mind that although the Gītā does not accept the independent Prakṛti of Sāṃkhya philosophy, the description of the further growth of Prakṛti is essentially the same in both places. As in the Gītā, so also in the Upaniṣads, there is a statement that,

etasmā jāyate prāṇo manaḥ sarvendriyāṇi ca |

khaṁ vāyur jyotir āpaḥ pṛthivī viśvasya dhāriṇī ||

that is, "from this (para-puruṣa), Prāṇa (Vitality), the Mind, all the senses, ether, air, fire, water, and the earth, which supports the Universe, these (all) are created " (Muṇḍa. 2.1.3; Kai. 1.15; Praśna. 6.4). For further details, see Chapter VIII of the Gītā-Rahasya. It has been stated by the Blessed Lord in the



4th stanza that He Himself is the .five Elements, namely, the Earth, "Water, etc. Now, saying that He is also the qualities which are to be found in these Elements, the Blessed Lord makes clear what is meant by the statement made above, that all these things are strung on a string like beads—]

५५ रसोऽहमप्सु कौन्तेय प्रभास्मि शशिसूर्ययोः ।

प्रणवः सर्वविदेषु शब्दः खे पौरुषं नृषु ॥ 7.8 ॥

पुण्यो गन्धः पृथिव्यां च तेजश्चास्मि विभावसौ ।

जीवनं सर्वभूतेषु तपश्चास्मि तपस्विषु ॥ 7.9 ॥

बीजं मां सर्वभूतानां विद्धि पार्थ सनातनम् ।

बुद्धिर्बुद्धिमतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ॥ 7.10 ॥

(7.8) I am the Liquidity, of water, O Kaunteya; I am the Effulgence, of the Sun and the Moon; I am the 'praṇava' (that is, the Om-kāra), in all the Vedas; I am the Sound, of Ether; and I am also the Manhood, in all men.

(7.9) And I am the puṇyagandha (that is, the smell), of the earth; and also, the Lustre, of fire; I am the Life-Force, in all created "beings; and I am the Austerity, in those who perform austere practices.

(7.10) O Pārtha! know that I am the

Eternal Seed, of all created beings; I am the Intelligence, of all intelligent people; and the Brilliance, of those who are bright.

बलं बलवतां चाहं कामरागविवर्जितम् ।

धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ॥ 7.11 ॥

ये चैव सात्त्विका भावा राजसास्तामसाश्च ये ।

मत्त एवेति तान्विद्धि न त्वहं तेषु ते मयि ॥ 7.12 ॥

(11) I am the Strength, of all the strong, but not their kāma (that is, Desire) or rāga (that is, Attachment to objects of sense); and O Bharataśreṣṭha! I am also the kāma, which dwells in all created beings, which is not antagonistical to Morality.

(12) And know also that the sāttvika, rājasa, and tāmasa 'Bhāva' (that is, objects) are all sprung out of Me; but they are in Me, and I am not in them.

[The meaning of the words "they are in Me and I am not in them" is very deep. The first, that is, the broad meaning, is that, all things have sprung from the Parameśvara, and that though the Parameśvara is the substratum in the shape of the qualities in all things, like the string round which the beads are strung, yet, the pervasiveness of the Parameśvara does not end there; and that, the Parameśvara pervades all these things and is also beyond; and the same meaning is brought out later on in the words, "I have occupied the whole of this universe by only a part of Myself" in Gī. 10.42; but, there is another meaning, which is always implied, namely, "though the

diversity in the three-constituted universe seems to have sprung from Me, yet, that diversity does not exist in My qualityless (nirguṇa) form"; and there are descriptions of the supernatural powers of the Parameśvara later on (Gī. 13.14 – 16), which have been made on the basis of this second meaning; such as, "bhūtabhṛt na ca bhūtaśtaḥ" (Gī. 9.4 and 5) etc. If the pervasiveness of the Parameśvara is thus more than that of the universe itself, -then it is clear that one must go beyond the Māyic universe in order to fully understand the true form of the

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Parameśvara; and this meaning is now plainly brought out by the Blessed Lord –]

§§ त्रिभिर्गुणमयैर्भावैरेभिः सर्वमिदं जगत् ।

मोहितं नाभिजानाति मामेभ्यः परमव्ययम् ॥ 7.13 ॥

(7.13) This entire universe, being confused by the three 'bhāva' (that is, objects), which are the embodiment of the three (sattva, rajas and tamas) constituents, does not realise Me, the Inexhaustible (Parameśvara), Who Am beyond them (that is, necessarily qualityless).

[ Māyā, or ignorance is the inherent quality of the senses and of the Body, in which the three-constituents are embodied; it is not the quality of the Ātman: the Ātman is Jñāna-formed,

and is permanent; and It is thrown into confusion, by the senses: this Non-Dualistic proposition, which has been mentioned in Chapter IX of the Gītā-Rahasya with reference to Māyā, has been stated in the above stanza. (See Gī. 7.24 and Gī. Ra. Ch. IX, pp.325 – 341.)

दैवी दृष्टेया गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।

मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥ 7.14 ॥

(7.14) This My divine Māyā, which is the embodiment of the constituents, is difficult to understand; and therefore, they alone, who surrender themselves to Me, can swim through, this Māyā.

[ This clearly shows that the Blessed Lord refers to the three-constituted Prakṛti of the Sāṃkhya system as His Māyā. It has been stated in the Nārāyaṇīyopākhyāna of the Mahābhārata that, the Blessed Lord, after showing His Cosmic Form to Nārada, said in the end:—

māyā hy eṣa mayā sṛṣṭā yan mām paśyasi Nārada ।

sarvabhūtaguṇairyuktaṁ naiva tvaṁ jñātum arhasi ॥

(Śān. 339. 44).

that is, "O Nārada, that which you see, is the Māyā, which has been created by Me. Do not think that I possess the qualities, which are to be found in the created world". The same proposition has now been stated here. For a description of the nature of Māyā, please refer to Gī. Ra. Ch. IX and X.]

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः ।

माययापहतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिताः ॥ 7.15 ॥

(7.15) Those fools and evil-doers, whose Jñāna has been, annihilated by Māyā, they, being inspired by an ungodly-Reason, do not surrender themselves to Me.

[The Blessed Lord has explained that those, who are engulfed in Māyā, forget the Parameśvara and are destroyed. HE now describes what happens to those, who do not do so, but surrender themselves to the Parameśvara, and worship Him –]

§§ चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।

आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥ 7.16 ॥

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।

प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥ 7.17 ॥

उदाराः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम् ।

आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम् ॥ 7.18 ॥

(7.16) O Bhārata-śreṣṭha Arjuna! four kinds of virtuous people worship Me, namely, the 'ātra ' (that is, those who are affected by disease), the 'jijñāsu'-s (that is, those who desire to acquire Knowledge), the 'arthārthī'-s (that is, those who entertain the desire for money or other desirable things), and the 'jñānin'-s (that is, those who, although they are

Accomplished (kṛtakṛtya), as they have acquired the Knowledge of the Parameśvara, and have nothing more to gain, yet, worship Me desirelessly).

(7.17) Out of these, that Jñānin, who is an 'ekabhakti' (that is, one, who, believing that there is no other, worships Me alone), and who always behaves like a 'yukta' (that is, with a desireless frame of mind), is the highest in worth. I am most beloved of the Jñānin, and the Jñānin is (most) beloved of Me.

(7.18) All these Devotees are 'udāra' (that is, good); but, (among all of them) 1 hold the Jñānin as equal to Myself; because, having become yukta-citta (that is, having his Mind united (to Me) ~Translator.) he has become steady in Me, Who Am the 51-52

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highest Goal (of everyone).

बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान्मां प्रपद्यते ।

वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥ 7.19 ॥

(7.19) After many births, the Jñānin, having come to the empirical conclusion that 'whatever is, is Vasudeva', comes and reaches Me. Such a 'mahātmā' (that is, noble soul ~Translator.) is rare.

[One must thoroughly understand the import of the statement, made by the Blessed Lord, that by worshipping His

form, a man acquires the Knowledge of the Parameśvara, after He had described that form, from the point of view of the Mutable and the Immutable, by saying that, (i) both Matter and Spirit are His forms, and that, (ii) He pervades everything on all sides homogeneously. Everyone needs to perform worship, whether it is of the Perceptible, or of the Imperceptible; but, as, out of these two, the worship of the Perceptible is easier, that kind of worship has been described here; and that is known as 'bhakti' (Devotion). Nevertheless, that kind of Devotion, in which a man entertains some kind of desire in his heart, and worships the Parameśvara for some particular object, is inferior; and, even those 'Knowledge-seekers' (jijñāsus), who are devoted with the intention of acquiring the Knowledge of the Parameśvara, must be considered as imperfect; because, their knowledge is not yet complete, as is apparent from their state of being 'Knowledge-seekers'. But, as all these are worshippers, they have all been referred to as 'udāra' (that is, 'going by a good path'), (stanza 18). But, the import of the first three stanzas is that, the worship desirelessly offered (Bhāg. 1.7.10) by those Jñānins, who have gone further, that is, who have become Accomplished as a result of the Acquisition of Knowledge and for whom, there is nothing more left in this world to do or to acquire (Gī. 3.17 – 19), is the highest kind of Devotion, The Devotion of devotees like Prahlāda and Nārada falls into this excellent category; and that is why the 'Yoga of Devotion' (bhakti-yoga) has been denned in the Bhāgavata as the

'desireless and endless worship of the Parameśvara' (Bhāg. 3.39.12; and Gī. Ra. Ch. XIII, p.572). It may

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safely be said that the words 'ekabhakti', and 'vāsudeva' in the 17th and 19th stanzas are from the Bhāgavata religion; nay, even that the above description of devotees is from the Bhāgavata religion. Because, in the Mahābhārata, while -the description of this religion is being given, and after the four kinds of devotees have been first described, we find it stated that:—

caturvidhā mama janā bhaktā evam hi me śrutam ।  
teṣāṃ ekāntinaḥ śreṣṭhā ye caivānanyadevatāḥ ॥  
aham eva gatis teṣāṃ nirāśīḥ karmakāriṇām ।  
ye ca śiṣṭās trayo bhaktāḥ phalakāmā hi te matāḥ ॥  
sarve cyavana-dharmās te pratibuddhas tu, śreṣṭhabhāk  
। (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 341. 33 – 35).

that is, " the other three kinds of devotees do not perform Actions like the 'amnyadaivata' ('no-other-deity') and the 'ekāntin' (solitudinal) devotee, but perform Action with some desire or other; and therefore, they are 'cyavanśīla', whereas, the 'ekāntin'-s are 'pratibuddha' (that is, scients), and superior. And later on the word 'Vasudeva' has been given a



metaphysical etymology by saying "sarvabhūtādhivāsaś ca vāsudevas tato hy aham", that is, "I am called 'Vāsudeva', because I reside (have my vāsa) in everything which is created" (Śān. 341.40). The Blessed Lord now explains why different people worship different deities, though there is only one Parameśvara everywhere –],

§§ कामैस्तैस्तैर्हृतज्ञानाः प्रपद्यन्तेऽन्यदेवताः ।

तं तं नियममास्थाय प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया ॥ 7.20 ॥

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्धयार्चितुमिच्छति ।

तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥ 7.21 ॥

(7.20) Various persons, being befooled by their respective desires, (such as, fruit in the shape of heaven etc.), according to their respective natures, follow those respective rules (of worship), and take to the worship of other (various) deities .

(7.21) Whatever form or deity any devotee may desire to - worship with Faith, I steady such his Faith therein.

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स तया श्रद्धया युक्तस्तस्याराधनमीहते ।

लभते च ततः कामान्मयैव विहितान्हि तान् ॥ 7.22 ॥

अन्तवत्तु फलं तेषां तद्वदत्यल्पमेधसाम् ।

देवान्देवयजो यान्ति मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि ॥ 7.23 ॥

(7.22) Then, being full of that Faith, he becomes engaged in" the 'rādhana' (that is, the worship) of that deity; and then he obtains those very desired fruits, which have been created by Me Myself.

(7.23) But, this fruit, which (these) short-sighted people obtain, is perishable (and not permanent like Release); those, who worship deities, reach the deities; and those who worship Me, come to Me.

[It is the common belief that though the Parameśvara is the One, Who gives Release, yet, the power to give the-various things, which are necessary for the ordinary worldly-life, can be given only by deities; and that, it is necessary to worship the deities for that purpose. How various people run after various deities (Gī. 17.1 – 6.), after it has thus become necessary, according to them, to worship deities, some running after Mhasobā, others observing Saturday, after the deity Saturn, etc., has been very nicely described in the above stanzas. But, what must be borne in mind here is. that, though the fruit to be obtained by worshipping various deities, may be looked upon as having been given by those respective deities, yet, ultimately that worship amounts to a worship of the Parameśvara (Gī. 9.23); and, that fruit also is essentially given by the Parameśvara (stanza 22). Not only is this so, but even this idea of worshipping the various deities is given by the Parameśvara, according to the previous destiny of a particular person (stanza 21); because, in this world, there is nothing else but the Parameśvara. The same doctrine has been laid down in

the Vedānta-Sūtras (3.2.38 – 41), and in the Upaniṣads (Kauṣī. 3.8). The utility of these diverse kinds of worship is, that after worshipping various deities, the Mind becomes steady and pure, and one ultimately acquires the-Knowledge of the One, and Permanent, Parameśvara. But, fruit obtained before the acquisition of that Knowledge is

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non-permanent. Therefore, the advice of the Blessed Lord to everyone is, that he should not be enmeshed in this Hope of Fruit, but should aspire to become a 'Jñānin' devotee. As the Blessed Lord gives reward to everyone according to his own Actions, (Gī. 1.11), although He does everything, and gives all kinds of rewards, it is also said, that He essentially does nothing whatsoever Himself (Gī. 5.14). The reader is referred to the further elucidation of this matter at page 369 in Chapter X and at pages 595 – 6 in Chapter XIII of the Gītā-Rahasya. The Blessed Lord now further explains what is meant above by saying that people run after deities according to their own natural inclinations, forgetting that the fruit of the worship of the deities is given by the Parameśvara Himself –]

§§ अव्यक्तं व्यक्तिमापन्नं मन्यन्ते मामबुद्धयः ।

परं भावमजानन्तो ममाव्ययमनुत्तमम् ॥ 7.24 ॥

नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः ।

मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम् ॥ 7.25 ॥

(7.24) The 'abuddhi' (that is, fools), not recognising my 'para' (that is, superior), best of all, and imperceptible form, look upon Me, Who am imperceptible, as having become perceptible.

(7.25) As I am enveloped in My Yoga-formed Illusion (that is, Māyā ~Translator.), I do not (clearly) appear to all (in My own Form). Fools do not Realise, that I am Unborn, and Inexhaustible.

[The device of giving up the Yoga-form, that is, imperceptible form, and taking up the perceptible form (Gī. 4.6; 7.15; 9.7), is called " Māyā ", by "Vedāntists; and when the Parameśvara becomes enveloped in this Yoga-Māyā, He begins to possess a perceptible appearance. In short, the import of this stanza is, that the perceptible universe is Māyic, or non-permanent; and that, the Parameśvara is Real, and Permanent. But the word 'māyā' in this place, and also in other places, is taken by some as meaning 'a super-natural or wonderful power'; and these say that this Māyā is not Unreal, but is as permanent as the Parameśvara Himself. As the form of Māyā has been

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considered by me at great length in Chapter IX of the Gītā-Rahasya, I will here only say that the proposition that Māyā is some wonderful and eternal pastime of the Parameśvara is

acceptable even to the Non-Dualistic Vedānta, because, although Māyā is an 'Appearance', created by the senses, yet, as this is done by the senses at the direction of the Parameśvara, Māyā, must be ultimately said to be the pastime of the Parameśvara. The only point at issue is, whether this Māyā is essentially Real, or Unreal; and on this point the doctrine of the Gītā, clearly appears from the above stanzas to be the same as that of the-Non-Dualistic Vedānta, namely that, that Māyā expressed by Name and Form, by which the Imperceptible Parameśvara is considered to have become perceptible – whether it is called a super-natural power or anything else – is merely an 'Appearance', or 'moha', created by 'ajñāna' or Ignorance; and that the true essential Parameśvara is different from it. Otherwise, there seems to be no reason for using the words 'abuddhi' or 'mūḍha' in this place. In short, Māyā is not Real, and the-Parameśvara alone is Real, and the Gītā says that, being confused by this Māyā, people run after various deities-. In the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (Br. 1.4.10), there is a similar statement; and it is stated there that those persons, who, not recognising that the Ātman and the Brahman are one and the same thing, run after various deities, with a distinguishing mind are the 'animals of the gods', that is to say, just as men benefit from cows-and other animals, so do these deities benefit from these ignorant devotees, and that these devotees do not obtain Release. So far, the Blessed Lord has given a description. of those, who being fooled by Māyā, worship diverse deities, with a

distinguishing mind. HE now explains how one escapes from this Māyā –]

वेदाहं समतीतानि वर्तमानानि चार्जुन ।

भविष्याणि च भूतानि मां तु वेद न कश्चन ॥ 7.26 ॥

(7.26) I know all bhūta-s (that is, created beings), (who-existed, or exist, or will be) in the past, present, and future;

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but, O Arjuna, none know Me;

इच्छाद्वेषसमुत्थेन द्वन्द्वमोहेन भारत ।

सर्वभूतानि संमोहं सर्गे यान्ति परन्तप ॥ 7.27 ॥

येषां त्वन्तगतं पापं जनानां पुण्यकर्मणाम् ।

ते द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुक्ता भजन्ते मां दृढव्रताः ॥ 7.28 ॥

(7.27) because, O Bhārata, all created beings are steeped in ignorance in this world, as a result of the confusion created by the pairs of Opposites (such as, pain and happiness etc.) arising, O Parantapa, from Desire and Hate.

(7.28) But, the virtuous people, whose sin is exhausted, become fixed in purpose, escaping from the ignorance created by the pairs of Opposites (of pain and happiness etc.), and worship Me.

[The Blessed Lord now describes the state of these people after they have thus become free from Māyā –]

§§ जरामरणमोक्षाय मामाश्रित्य यतन्ति ये ।

ते ब्रह्म तद्विदुः कृत्स्नमध्यात्मं कर्म चाखिलम् ॥ 7.29 ॥

साधिभूताधिदैवं मां साधियज्ञं च ये विदुः ।

प्रयाणकालेऽपि च मां ते विदुर्युक्तचेतसः ॥ 7.30 ॥

(7.29) All those, who (thus) taking shelter in Me, attempt to escape from jarāmaraṇa (that is from the cycle of re-births) Realise what (all) Brahman, (all) Absolute Self, and all Karma (is).

(7.30) Those, who know Me, along with the adhibhūta, the adhidaiva, and the adhiyajña (that is, who know that I am all that), such (being) yukta-citta (that is, Mind-united with Me ~Translator.), Know Me, even at the time of death.

[See the explanation given in the next chapter of-the words adhyātma, adhibhūta, adhidaiva, and adhiyajña. The words "even at the time of death" in the last stanza have reference to the doctrine of the Dharma-Śāstra and of the Upaniṣads that a man has his next birth according to the desire which is most prominent in his mind at the moment of his death.

Nevertheless, the word "even" clearly shows that, unless a man has acquired complete Knowledge of the Paramēśvara in his lifetime, he cannot acquire that

Knowledge light at the moment of death (See Gī. 2.72). A further explanation has been given in the next chapter. It may be said that the next chapter has been introduced by the words 'adhibhūta', etc., in this stanza.]

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे ज्ञानविज्ञानयोगो नाम सप्तमोऽध्यायः ॥ ७ ॥

Thus ends the seventh chapter entitled JÑĀNA-VIJÑĀNA Yoga in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman (that is, the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

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# CHAPTER VIII – AKṢARA-BRAHMA YOGA.

अष्टमोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER VIII.

[ The explanation of the Jñāna and Vijñāna included in "the Karma-Yoga is continued in this chapter, and after first explaining the meaning of the various forms of the Parameśvara, such as, Brahman, adhyātma, karma, adhibhūta, adhidaiva, and adhiyajña, mentioned at the end of the last chapter, the inner import thereof is explained. But, as this explanation has been given merely by defining those several worlds, that is to say, in an extremely concise way, it is necessary to give a somewhat exhaustive explanation of this subject in this annotation. Different people form different ideas in different ways about the creator of the universe, on looking at the external universe. Some say that all things, which exist in the world, are only evolutes of the five primordial Elements (mahābhūta), and that there is no other Original Principle, except these five primordial Elements. There are others, who maintain that all this world has been created from a Yajña as stated in the fourth chapter of the Gītā; and

that, therefore, the Parameśvara is of the form of a yajña-nārāyaṇa; and that He can be worshipped only by a Yajña. A third class say that the various activities of the world are not carried out by the material objects by themselves; but that, in each of them, there is some active (śaśtana) deity (or puruṣa), and that these deities carry on all these activities; and that, therefore, we must worship these deities. Pot example, the act of giving light is performed by the 'puruṣa' called Sun, embodied in the globe, made up of the five primordial Elements, which is known as 'the Sun'; and this puruṣa is the subject-matter of worship. A fourth class says, that it is not proper to imagine that there exists in everything, some deity, other than the thing itself. Just as the Ātman exists in the body of a man, so does there also exist in everything, some subtle form of that very thing, that is to say, some subtle force, like the Ātman; and that thing is the original and true form of it. For instance, they say that the five gross primordial Elements have, at their core,

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the five Fine Elements (tanmātra-s); and that in the material organs, such as, the hand or the foot, there are similar fundamental subtle organs. The Sāṃkhya doctrine that each person has a different Ātman, and that there are innumerable such Ātmans, is based on this fourth theory. But in this stanza, the Sāṃkhya doctrine seems to be included in the adhideha

class. These four schools of thought are respectively called the adhibhūta, the adhiyajña, the adhidaivata, and the adhyātmaka. Whenever the prefix 'adhi' is placed behind any word, it conveys the meaning of 'tamadhikṛtya', 'tadviṣayaka', that is, 'in that matter', or, 'embodied in it'. According to this interpretation, 'adhidaivata' means 'the Principle existing in many deities'. 'adhyātma' ordinarily means 'the science which maintains that there is only one Ātman pervading everything'; but this is the interpretation by way of 'conclusion drawn' (siddhānta-pakṣa); that is to say, this is the conclusion (siddhānta) arrived at by the Vedānta-sastra, after considering the pros and cons of the theory that there are numerous Ātmans in numerous human beings or things, which is the hypothetical position (pūrvapakṣa). So, when the hypothetical position has to be considered, it is assumed that the subtle form of the Ātman in every-thing is different, and this is the meaning conveyed by the word 'adhyātma' in the present stanza. How one and the same exposition becomes diversified into different classes . from the adhyātma, the adhidaivata and the adhibhūta points of view, has been made clear in the Mahābhārata, by giving an example of the organs of a man (See Mā. Bh5. Śān. 313 and Aśva. 41). The writer of the Mahābhārata. says, that the question of the organs of human beings can be considered from three points of view, namely, the 'adhibhūta', the 'ādhyātmika' and the 'adhidaivata'. All those things, which are perceivable by these organs, namely, that which has to be taken by the hands, that which has to\* be

heard by the ears, that which has to be seen by the eyes, or that which has to be contemplated by the Mind, all this -is the 'adhibhūta'; and the subtle capacities of these organs,. namely, the hands, feet, etc., (according to the Sāṃkhya.

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system), that is to say, the subtle senses are the 'adhyātma'-s of those organs; but when one keeps aside both these points of view, and considers the matter from the 'adhidaivata' point of view, Indra is said to be the deity of the hands, Viṣṇu, of the feet; Mitra, of the anus; Prajāpati, of the organ of generation; Agni, of the speech; Sūrya (Sun), of the eyes; the eight cardinal points or Ether, of the ears; water, of the tongue; the earth, of the nose; the wind, of the skin; the Moon, of the mind; buddhi (Reason), of Individuation, and puruṣa (Spirit), of the Reason; and these various deities are said to be performing the various functions of these organs. Among the symbols of the form of the Brahman, which have been described in the Upaniṣads for purposes of worship, the Mind is described as the adhyātma symbol, and the Sun or the firmament as the 'adhidaivata' symbol (Chān. 3.18.1). It is not that the distinction between the 'adhyātma' and the 'adhidaivata' has been made only for the purpose of worship. But, in considering the respective superiority of the organs of speech, or of seeing, or of hearing, etc., and of Vitality (prāṇa), the -matter is considered once from the Metaphysical (adhyātma) point of -view by taking the

subtle form of the organs of the voice, the eyes, and the ears, and again from the Intuitionist {adhidaivata} point of view, taking the Agni, the Sun, and Ether, as the deities of those organs (Bṛ. 1.5.31 – 23; Chān. 1.2, 3; Kauṣī. 4.12, 13). In short, the distinction between 'adhidaivata', 'adhibhūta', 'adhyātma' etc. has been in vogue since very old times; and the question as to which of these various ideas regarding the form of the Parameśvara is the correct idea, or as to the inner import of such ideas, having arisen in those times, Yājñavalkya has told Uddālaka Āruṇī in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad (Bṛ. 3.4), that there is only one Paramātmā, Which subsists at the core of all created things, all deities, all adhyātma, all spheres, all Yajñas, and all bodies what-soever, and Which makes them unwittingly perform their respective functions. This doctrine of the Upaniṣads has been accepted in the Antaryāmyadhikaraṇa of the Vedānta-Sūtras (Ve. Sū. 1.2.18 – 20), where it has been proved that

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this Principle, which, exists at the inner core of everything, is not the Prakṛti or the Jīvātman of the Sāṃkhya system, but the Paramātmā. The Blessed Lord now tells Arjuna, with reference to this proposition, that there is only one Parameśvara, Who pervades every human body, all created beings (as adhibhūta), all Yajñas (as adhiyajña), all deities (as adhidaivata), all Karma, and all the subtle (that is,

Metaphysical) forms of everything; and that the diversity, or the various kinds of Knowledge of deities, Yajñas etc. is not true Knowledge. The words 'adhibhūta' etc., used by the Blessed Lord at the end of the seventh chapter, create in Arjuna a desire to learn their meaning, and he first asks as follows –]

अर्जुन उवाच

§§ किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।

अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तमधिदैवं किमुच्यते ॥ 8.1 ॥

अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र देहेऽस्मिन्मधुसूदन ।

प्रयाणकाले च कथं ज्ञेयोऽसि नियतात्मभिः ॥ 8.2 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(8.1) O Puruṣottama, what is that Brahman?; what is adhyātma?; what is karma?; what is to be called adhibhūta?; and what is called adhidaivata?;

(8.2) of what kind is the adhiyajña? and O Madhusūdana, Who is (the adhideha) in this Body (that is, deha ~Translator.)?; and how do those, who control their senses, Realise You, at the moment of their death? (Tell me this).

[The words 'brahma', 'adhyātma', 'karma', 'adhibhūta', and 'adhiyajña' are to be found in the last chapter; but, in addition to these, Arjuna has asked something new, namely, "who is the 'adhideha'?". If this is borne in mind, it will not be difficult to understand the meaning of the following answer.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते ।

भूतभावोद्भवकरो विसर्गः कर्मसंज्ञितः ॥ 8.3 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(8.3) That Element, which is

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parama (that is, higher ~Translator.), (than anything else), and akṣara (this is, immutable), is BRAHMAN; (and) the fundamental quality of each and every object itself (that is, its SVA-bhāva) is called 'ADHYĀTMA', That 'visarga' or 'creative activity' which creates (the move-able and immoveable) created things (from the immutable Brahman) is called KARMA.

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् ।

अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर ॥ 8.4 ॥

(8.4) The kṣara (that is, 'conditioned by Name and Form', or 'perishable') state (of all things which have come into existence) is the 'ADHIBHŪTA'; and the puruṣa (that is, the conscious (sacetana) Overlord (adhiṣṭhita), Who exists in all

things) is the 'ADHIDAIVATA'. HE, who is called the ADHIYJÑANA [that is, the Lord (adhipati) of all Yajñas] is Myself, Who am (ADHIDEHA), (that is, am the Installed ~Translator.), in this Body, O Most Superior among all embodied beings!

[The word 'parama' in the third stanza is not an adjective of Brahma, but of 'akṣara'. In Sāṃkhya philosophy, the imperceptible Prakṛti is also called 'akṣara' (immutable), (Gī. 15.16). But, the Brahman of the Vedāntists is beyond this imperceptible and immutable Prakṛti (see stanzas 20 and 31 of this chapter); and therefore, although the word 'akṣara' alone is used, it may mean either the Sāṃkhya Prakṛti, or the Brahman. In order that such a doubt should not arise, the adjective 'parama' has been placed before the word 'akṣara' in defining the word Brahman (Gī. Ra. Chap. IX, pp.274 – 277). I have explained the word 'svabhāva' as "the subtle form' (sūkṣma-svarūpa) of any and every object", following the example given above from the Mahābhārata. In the Nāsadīyasūkta, the visible world is called the 'viśṛṣṭi' (visarga), that is, 'growth' of the Parabrahman (Gī. Ra. p.351); and the word 'visarga' must be understood here in the same meaning. It is not necessary to interpret the word 'visarga' as meaning the 'havirutsarga of the Yajñas'. Why this visible world is itself called 'Karma' has been



explained at p.362 of Chapter X of the Gītā-Rahasya. 'kṣara' is the mutable Name-d and Form-ed 'Appearance' of everything created; and, the Immutable Principle beyond it, is to be understood as the Brahman. The word 'puruṣa' includes the 'puruṣa' in the Sun, the Varuṇa-puruṣa or the deity in water, and other conscious (sacetana) subtle-formed deities, as also the Golden Embryo (hiraṇya-garbha). The word 'adhiyajña' has not been defined here by the Blessed Lord; because a detailed description of the Yajña has been given above in the 3rd and 4th chapters, and the Blessed Lord has again later on stated (Gī. 9.24; 5.29; .and Ma. Bhā. Śān. 340), that "I am the Lord and the recipient of all Yajñas". After having in this way described the characteristic features of the 'adhyātma' etc., the Blessed Lord has ultimately said shortly that " (that which is called) the 'adhiyajña' is Myself, Who Am in this deha ", that is to say, that He is the adhideha as also the adhiyajña in the human body. The Sāṃkhyas believe that everybody has a different Ātman (puruṣa), and these Ātmans are innumerable; but this doctrine is not acceptable to Vedānta Philosophy, which holds that although there may "be innumerable bodies, there is only one Ātman in all of them (Gī. Ra. Ch. VII, p.225). This very proposition is borne out by the sentence " I am the adhideha". Nevertheless, the words "I am" in this sentence have not been said only with reference to the 'adhiyajña' or the 'adhideha'; and their reference to the previous words adhyātma, etc., is patent. Therefore, the sum and substance of the whole seems to be:– take the various Yajñas, take the

various deities in various things, take the five perishable elemental principles, take the subtle forms of substance, take the diversity of Ātmans, take Brahman, take Karma, or take the various bodies of different human beings, I am everywhere, that is, there is only one Parameśvara-principle in all things. According to some, there is no independent description here of the 'adhideha' form; and the 'adhideha' has been mentioned by implication in giving a definition of the 'adhiyajña'; but, I do not consider this interpretation as correct. Wherever this

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subject-matter has been referred to, not only in the Gītā, but also in the Upaniṣads and in the Vedānta-Sūtras, (Br. 3. 7; Ve. Sū. 1. 2. 20), the embodied Ātman has been considered side by side with the adhibhūta and the other forms of the Parameśvara; and the doctrine has been laid down, that everywhere there is only one Paramātman. Besides, as there has been previously asked a question about the adhideha, it is logical to conclude that that aspect "has been mentioned here distinctly and not by implication. One is likely to think at first sight that if all that which is, is the Parabrahman, then, in describing the various forms of the Parabrahman, such as, the adhibhūta etc., it was not necessary to consider the Parabrahman also. But, as this description of diversity has been addressed to people, who are engrossed in the different

kinds of worship on the basis that the Brahman, the Ātman, the deities, the Yājñanārāyaṇa, etc., are all different from each other, the declaration that "I am all this", has been made after explaining the characteristics of the differences arising on account of the different beliefs of different people. When one looks at it from this point of view, no such doubt can arise. The Blessed Lord has thus explained this diversity by saying that although various distinctions may be made for purposes of worship, such as, the adhibhūta, the adhidaivata, the adhyātma, the adhiyajña, the adhideha, etc., yet, this diversity is not real; and that, as a matter of fact, there is only one Parameśvara, Who pervades everything. HE now gives His reply to the last question of Arjuna, namely, how the All-pervading Parameśvara is Realised at the moment of death –]

§§ अन्तकाले च मामेव स्मरन्मुक्त्वा कलेवरम् ।

यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥ 8.5 ॥

यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।

तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः ॥ 8.6 ॥

(8.5) And there is no doubt that he who leaves his body, thinking of Me at the moment of death, is merged in My form.

(8.6) O, Kaunteya, thinking of whatever form (bhāva ~Translator.) a man ultimately leaves his body, because, he has

sadā, (that is, for the whole of his life) been engrossed in thinking of that form, that is the form (bhāva) in which he is (later on) merged.

[In the fifth stanza, the Blessed Lord has explained the necessity and the result of thinking of the Parameśvara at the moment of death; but, that is likely to give rise to the misunderstanding, that it will be enough if a person thinks of the Parameśvara only at the moment of death. There-fore, it is stated in the sixth stanza, that whatever is in the mind throughout life, does not leave the mind at the moment of death; and, the necessity of remembering and worshipping the Parameśvara throughout life, and not only at the moment of death, is made clear (Gī. Ra. Ch. X., p.398). "When one accepts this proposition, it naturally follows that those, who worship the Parameśvara at the moment of death are merged in the Parameśvara; and that those, who worship other deities at that moment, are merged in the other deities (Gī. 7.23; 8.13; and 9.25); because, as has been stated in the Chāndogyopaniṣad, "yathā kratuḥ asmiml loke puruṣo bhavati tathetaḥ pretya bhavati" (Chān. 3.14.1), that is, "a man gets a state after death, which is consistent with his 'kratu' or saṁkalpa, that is, his resolution". There are similar sentences in other Upaniṣads as in the Chāndogya (Praśna. 3.10; Maitryu. 4.6). But the Gītā now says that unless the Mind is steeped in one particular aspiration throughout, life, it is not possible to have that aspiration during the throes of the passing away of life. Therefore, consistently with the doctrine that it is

necessary to meditate on the Parameśvara 'āmarāṇānta' that is, throughout life' (Ve. Sū. 4.1.12), the Blessed Lord now tells Arjuna that –)

तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्माभिवैष्यस्यसंशयम् ॥ 8.7 ॥

(8.7) Therefore, think of Me at all times (that is, always), and fight; when you have dedicated your Mind and your Reason to Me, you will, (notwithstanding that you have fought), undoubtedly come and be merged in Me,

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अभ्यासयोगयुक्तेन चेतसा नान्यगामिना ।

परमं पुरुषं दिव्यं याति पार्थानुचिन्तयन् ॥ 8.8 ॥

(8.8) O Pārtha! when a man, with the help of practice, steadies his Mind, without letting it stray elsewhere, and meditates on the Highest Spirit, he goes and is merged in that Spirit.

[Those who maintain that according the Bhagavadgītā, one must give up worldly life and take to Devotion, should pay attention to the proposition laid down in the seventh stanza. It is unquestionable that Release is obtained by Devotion combined with the Knowledge of the: Parameśvara; and that, in order to possess that frame of mind at the moment of death, it is necessary to have that practice throughout life. But,

it is not necessary, according to the Gītā, for this purpose, to give up Action. On the other hand, it is the proposition of the Gītā-science, that even the Devotee of the Blessed Lord must desirelessly perform all Actions, which fall to his lot, according to the duties allocated to him; and the same meaning has been conveyed by the words "continually meditate on Me, and fight". The Blessed Lord now describes how the Karma-Yogin, who desirelessly performs Action throughout life, with the idea of dedicating it to the Parameśvara, meditates on the effulgent Highest Spirit at the moment of death –]

§§ कविं पुराणमनुशासितार-मणोरणीयांसमनुस्मरेद्यः ।

सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूप मादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥

8.9 ॥

प्रयाणकाले मनसाचलेन भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।

भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक् स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति

दिव्यम् ॥ 8.10 ॥

(8.9) That (man), who meditates on the Puruṣa, Who is the kavi (that is, omniscient), Who is the Ancient, the All-ruler, the Minuter-than-the-atom, the dhātā (that is, the supporter, or the doer) of everything, Whose form is unimaginable, and Who is as brilliant as the Sun beyond the darkness,

(8.10) after steadying his Mind by force of Yoga (in the shape of control of the senses), and being imbued with Devotion, and properly keeping the prana (that is, the Vital breath

~Translator.)

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between the two eye-brows at the moment of death, such (a man) goes and is merged in that effulgent Highest Spirit.

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति विशन्ति यद्यतयो वीतरागाः ।  
यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये ॥

8.11 ॥

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च ।  
मूर्धन्याध्यायात्मनः प्राणमास्थितो योगधारणाम् ॥ 8.12 ॥

ॐ इत्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् ।

यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् ॥ 8.13 ॥

(8.11) I shall briefly describe to you that pada, (that is the OM-formed Brahman), which is called akṣara by the vedavit-s (that is, by those, who know the Vedas. ~Translator.); which, Yatins enter after having become vītarāga (that is, free from love. ~Translator.), and desiring which, they observe the rules laid down for brahmacārin-s.

(8.12) Controlling all the opening (in the shapes of organs), and taking the life-breath into the head, after having controlled the Mind in the heart, and becoming steady in the Yoga of Mental Absorption,

(8.13) and mediating on OM, the one-worded form of the Brahman, and thinking of Me, who gives up his body, he reaches a superlative state.

[ The description of the form of the Parameśvara in the stanzas 9 to 11, has been borrowed from the Upaniṣads. The words 'aṇoraṇīyān' in the 9th stanza, as also the last quarter of that stanza is from the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (Śve. 3.8 and 9); and the first quarter of the stanza 11, according to its implication, and the second quarter of it, literally, are from Kaṭhopanīṣad (Katha. 2.15). In the Kaṭhopanīṣad, the word 'om ityetat' has been clearly expressed after the words "tat te padam saṁgrāheṇa bravīmi". According to this, the words akṣara and pada, in the eleventh stanza, must be taken to mean "the Brahman in the shape of the word 'OM'", or "the word 'OM'"; and it is absolutely clear from stanza 13, that the worship of the OM-kāra is meant there (see Praśna. 5). Nevertheless, it cannot be said that the Blessed Lord did not mean the imperishable Brahman by the word 'OM', and "the highest

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state", by the word 'pada'; because it can be said that the latter 'om' is a letter from the alphabet; and also that it is imperishable, as being the symbol of the Brahman (see. Stanza 21 later on); that is why, I have retained the double-



meaninged words 'akṣara' and 'pada' from the original Sanskrit in my translation of stanza 11. The Blessed Lord now further describes the superlative state, which is reached by this worship—]

§§ अनन्यचेताः सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः ।

तस्याहं सुलभः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः ॥ 8.14 ॥

मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।

नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ॥ 8.15 ॥

आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोकाः पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन ।

मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ॥ 8.16 ॥

(8.14) O Pārtha! Whoever, with a feeling that there is none other than Me, ever and continually thinks of Me, to that nitya-yukta (that is, perpetually steeped-in Yoga), (Karma-) Yogin, becoming merged in Me, is easy.

(8.15) After having come and become merged in Me, that mahātmā (that is, noble soul ~Translator.), who has attained the highest perfection, does not get re-birth, which is the home of unhappiness and non-permanent.

(8.16) O Arjuna! There is bound to be a punarāvartana (that is, a return) from even the sphere of the Brahmin and other spheres (such as, heaven etc.), (to this world sometimes or other); but, O son of Kunti! After having become merged in Me, there is no re-birth.

[The word punarāvartana in the 16th stanza means coming back to the earth after one's merit is over (See, Gī. 9.21; Ma. Bhā. Vana. 260). Even if a man reaches the spheres of Indra, Sūrya, nay, even of the Brahman, by such ritual as Yajña, or the worship of the deities, or the recital of the Vedas, yet, as soon as the merit which he had acquired (before death) is exhausted, he has to return to this world (Br. 4.4.6); or at any rate, it becomes necessary for him to fall into the cycle of re-births, after the sphere

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of the Brahman has ceased to exist; therefore, all these states are of a lower order; and as there is no re-birth after the Realisation of the Parameśvara, that state is the highest: such is the import of the 16th stanza (See Gī. 9. 20, 21). In support of the statement that even the sphere of the Brahman is non-permanent, the Blessed Lord now explains how the entire cosmos, including the sphere of the Brahman, is created and destroyed over and over again –]

§§ सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तमहर्षद्ब्रह्मणो विदुः ।

रात्रिं युगसहस्रान्तां तेऽहोरात्रविदो जनाः ॥ 8.17 ॥

(8.17) Those persons, who (essentially) understand what is meant by 'day' and 'night', realise that the day of Brahmadeva is made up of a thousand {mafia-) Yugas (each mahāyuga being

made up of the four Yuga periods called Kṛta, Tretā, Dvāpara, and Kali respectively), and that one thousand (similar) Yugas make one night (of his).

[ This stanza has appeared in the Gītā without there being a previous explanation of the calculation of a Yuga; and it has to be understood by reference to such a table, which is to be found elsewhere. This table, as also this stanza from the Gītā, are to be found in the Bhārata (Śān. 231.31), and in the Manu-Smṛti (Manu. 1. 73); and the same description has been given in the Nirukta of Yāska (Nirukta, 14.9). The day of Brahmadeva is also known as a 'kalpa'. The word 'avyakta', used in the next stanza, means the avyakta (that is, imperceptible) Prakṛti of Sāṃkhya philosophy, and not the Parabrahman; because, it is clearly stated later on in the 20th stanza, that the Imperceptible in the form of the Brahman, is something beyond the 'avyakta' described in this stanza. How the Perceptible (vyakta) universe springs from the Imperceptible, as also the method showing how the 'kalpa' has to be computed, has been given at p.264 in Chapter VIII of the Gītā-Rahasya, to which the reader is referred.]

अव्यक्तादव्यक्तयः सर्वाः प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।

रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसंज्ञके ॥ 8.18 ॥

(8.18) When this day (of Brahmadeva) starts, all perceptible

(objects) are created out of the Imperceptible; and when (his) night starts, (they) become dissolved into the above-mentioned Imperceptible.

भूतग्रामः स एवायं भूत्वा भूत्वा प्रलीयते ।

रात्र्यागमेऽवशः पार्थ प्रभवत्यहरागमे ॥ 8.19 ॥

(8.19) This collection of beings, coming (thus) to birth again and again, is dissolved when the night starts (as though put into a machine), being 'avaśa' (that is, whether they personally wish it or not); and O Pārtha I (it) comes to birth (again) when the day starts.

[ That is to say, although a man may have acquired a permanent residence in the sphere of the Brahman, as a result of his meritorious Actions, yet, as even the Brahma-loka is destroyed when Destruction (pralaya) starts, created beings cannot escape coming to birth again at the beginning of a new Kalpa. The Blessed Lord now explains the only way in which this can be avoided –]

§§ परस्तस्मात्तु भावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः ।

यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥ 8.20 ॥

अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमाहुः परमां गतिम् ।

यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥ 8.21 ॥

पुरुषः स परः पार्थ भक्त्या लभ्यस्त्वनन्यया ।

यस्यान्तःस्थानि भूतानि येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ॥ 8.22 ॥

(8.20) But, the other eternal Imperceptible, which is beyond the Imperceptible mentioned above, which does not come to an end even if all created things come to an end,

(8.21) that Imperceptible, which is (also) called 'akṣara' which is said to be the parama (that is, the most excellent or the ultimate) state, (and) having reached which, there is no return (to birth), that, indeed is My super-excellent sphere.

(8.22) O Pārtha! that para (that is, highest) Spirit, within Which all created beings are contained, and by Which all this has been enclosed or pervaded, can be reached only by Devotion, - which is ananya (that is, to-none-other ~Translator.).

[The 20th and 21st stanzas make together only one sentence. The word 'avyakta' in the 20th stanza, has first been applied to the Sāṃkhya Prakṛti, that is, to the

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Imperceptible mentioned in the 18th stanza; and later on, the same word has been applied to the Parabrahman, Which is beyond the Sāṃkhya Prakṛti; and it has been stated in the 21st stanza that this second Imperceptible is also called 'akṣara' (that is, the Immutable); similarly, in the beginning of this chapter, there is the phrase "akṣaram brahma paramam", (that is, "the immutable highest Brahman "; cf., 8.3 ~Translator.). In short, the word 'akṣara' (Immutable) like the word 'avyakta' (Imperceptible) has been used in two meanings in the Gītā; it is

not that the Sāṃkhya Prakṛti alone is imperceptible and immutable, but the Parameśvara or the Brahman, Which "is not destroyed, even when all created things are destroyed" is also immutable and imperceptible. This clearly shows that the word 'akṣara', used in giving the characteristics of the "Puruṣottama" in Chapter XV, where it is stated that He, is beyond the kṣara (mutable) and the akṣara (immutable), has been used with reference to the Sāṃkhya Prakṛti (see, Gī. 15.16 – 18). In short, it must be borne in mind that, both the adjectives 'avyakta' and 'akṣara' have been used in the Gītā , sometimes with reference to the Sāṃkhya Prakṛti, and sometimes with reference to the Parabrahman beyond this Prakṛti (Gī. Ra. pp.275 – 277). The form of the Parabrahman, which is beyond the Perceptible and the Imperceptible has been referred to in the ninth chapter of the Gītā-Rahasya, to which the reader is referred. So far, there has been a description of the 'akṣara brahma' (Immutable Brahman), that is, of the goal, having reached which, a man escapes from the necessity of re-birth. The Blessed Lord now describes the difference, from the point of view of time of death and goal reached, between those for whom there is no 'anāvṛtti', that is, no coming back after death, and those for whom there is 'āvṛtti', that is, those who have to come back from heaven and take birth again –]

§§ यत्र काले त्वनावृत्तिमावृत्तिं चैव योगिनः ।

प्रयाता यान्ति तं कालं वक्ष्यामि भरतर्षभ ॥ 8.23 ॥

(8.23) I shall now mention to you, O Bharataśreṣṭha! the

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time of death, having died when, the (Karma-) Yogins do not come back (to birth in this world); and (the time of death, having died) when, they come again.

अग्निर्ज्योतिरहः शुक्लः षण्मासा उत्तरायणम् ।

तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति ब्रह्म ब्रह्मविदो जनाः ॥ 8.24 ॥

धूमो रात्रिस्तथा कृष्णः षण्मासा दक्षिणायनम् ।

तत्र चान्द्रमसं ज्योतिर्योगी प्राप्य निवर्तते ॥ 8.25 ॥

शुक्लकृष्णे गती ह्येते जगतः शाश्वते मते ।

एकया यात्यनावृत्तिमन्ययावर्तते पुनः ॥ 8.26 ॥

(8.24) The Fire, jyotiḥ (that is, flames), daytime, the bright half (of the month), and. the six months of the uttarāyaṇa (that is, northern solstice ~Translator.), those men, knowers of Brahman, who die in these, attain the Brahman after death (and do not come back)..

(8.25) (Fire), smoke, night, the dark half (of the month), and the six months of the dakṣiṇāyana (that is, the southern solstice~Translator.), the (Karma-) Yogin (who dies) in these,, going to the light of the Moon, (that is, the sphere of the Moon), returns (after his acquired merit is over).

(8.26) In this way, the white and the black (that is, the light and the dark), have been considered the two 'śāśvate gatī' (that is, the eternal paths) of the world; going by one path, one does not return; and by the other path, one returns.

[These two paths are known in the Upaniṣads by the names 'devayāna' (bright half) and 'pitṛyāna' (dark half), or the 'arcirādi-mārga' and the 'dhūmrādi-mārga'; and these paths have been described even in the Ṛg-Veda. When fire is set to the dead body of a man, that is, from fire itself, both these paths commence; therefore, the word 'Fire' must be taken as implied from the previous stanza into the 25th stanza. As the only object of the 25th stanza is to show the difference between the path described in the previous stanza and the second path, the word 'Fire' has not been repeated in it. A further explanation about this matter has been given towards the end of Chapter X of the

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Gītā-Rahasya (pp.408 to 412), to which the reader is referred, and which will clearly explain the import of this stanza. The Blessed Lord now explains the benefit of realising the principle underlying these two paths –]

॥ नैते सृती पार्थ जानन्योगी मुह्यति कश्चन ।



तस्मात्सर्वेषु कालेषु योगयुक्तो भवार्जुन ॥ 8.27 ॥

वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपःसु चैव दानेषु यत् पुण्यफलं प्रदिष्टम् ।

अत्येति तत्सर्वमिदं विदित्वा योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम् ॥

8.28 ॥

(8.27) O Pārtha! no (Karma-) Yogin, who (essentially) understands these two sṛtī-s (that is, paths) is overcome by Ignorance; therefore, O Arjuna! become (Karma-) Yoga-yukta at all times.

(8.28) Understanding this (principle which has been explained above), the (Karma-) Yogin transcends the fruit in the shape of merit mentioned in the Vedas, in the Yajñas, for austerity, and for charity, and reaches the highest state, which lies beyond.

[ It is clear that the man, who has understood the principle underlying these two paths, namely, the devayāna and the pitṛyāna, that is, who has understood that, by going by the devayāna path, he does not incur re-birth, and that the pitṛyāna path, though productive of heaven, is, yet, not productive of Release, will, of course, choose that path out of the two, which is truly beneficial to him; and will not ignorantly follow the path, which is of a lower order; and it is to convey this idea that the words, "one who (essentially) understands these two sṛtī-s, that is, paths" have been used in the former stanza. These stanzas mean that the Karma-Yogin understands which path, out of the devayāna and the pitṛyāna leads where; and that he, therefore, naturally goes along that path, which is

the better one, and acquires Release, avoiding the trips to and from heaven; and in the 27th stanza, the Blessed Lord has advised Arjuna to act accordingly.]

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इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे अक्षरब्रह्मयोगो नामाष्टमोऽध्यायः ॥ ८ ॥

Thus ends the eighth chapter entitled AKSHARA-BRAHMA Yoga in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman, (that is, on the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

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# CHAPTER IX – RĀJAVIDYA- RĀJAGUHYA YOGA.

नवमोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER IX.

[In order to show how a man, by practising the Karma-Yoga, acquires peace of mind or Release as a result of his acquiring full Knowledge of the Parameśvara, an exposition of Jñāna (Spiritual Knowledge) and Vijñāna (empirical Knowledge) has been started in Chapter VII; and the form of the immutable and imperceptible Spirit has been described; and the Blessed Lord has explained in the last chapter how the worship of the OM-kāra (omkāropāsanā) should be performed at the moment of the close of life, after entering into mental absorption according to the Pātañjala-Yoga, in order that that form of the Parameśvara should remain fixed in the mind even at the moment of death. But, acquiring the Knowledge of the immutable Brahman is in itself difficult; and if, in addition to that, mental absorption is prescribed as an essential, this path of life will have to be given up by ordinary people! Bearing this difficulty in mind, the Blessed Lord now explains a royal road, by following which the Knowledge of the Parameśvara will

become easy for everybody. This path is called the Path of Devotion (bhaktimārga); and I have fully discussed that path in Chapter XIII of the Gītā-Rahasya. In this path, the form of the Paramēśvara can be realised by means of love, and is vyakta, that is, actually perceptible; and the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th chapters contain an exhaustive description of that perceptible form. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that this Path of Devotion is not something independent, but a part of the Jñāna and Vijñāna necessary for acquiring the Karma-Yoga, of which a description was started in Chapter VII; and this chapter has been opened as being a part of the previous exposition of Jñāna and Vi jñāna].

श्रीभगवानुवाच

§§ इदं तु ते गुह्यतमं प्रवक्ष्याम्यनसूयवे ।

ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्षयसेऽशुभात् ॥ 9.1 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(9.1) Now, as you are not

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fault-finder, I will expound to you the most mysterious Spiritual Knowledge, coupled with empirical Knowledge, by knowing which, you will become free from sin (to which, listen).

राजविद्या राजगुह्यं पवित्रमिदमुत्तमम् ।

प्रत्यक्षावगमं धर्म्यं सुसुखं कर्तुमव्ययम् ॥ 9.2 ॥

अश्रद्धधानाः पुरुषा धर्मस्यास्य परन्तप ।

अप्राप्य मां निवर्तन्ते मृत्युसंसारवर्त्मनि ॥ 9.3 ॥

(2) This (Knowledge) is the king, (that is, the most superior) of all mysteries, it is a rājavidyā [that is, the most superior science (vidyā) of all], it is holy, excellent, actually realisable, easy to observe, consistent with religion, . and inexhaustible.

(3) Those persons, O Parantapa! who do not put faith in this religion, return to the path of worldly life, circumscribed by death, instead of coming to Me (that, is, they do not attain Release).

[The meanings of the words 'rājavidyā', 'rājaguhya' and 'pratyakṣāvagama' in the second stanza, have been fully-considered in Chapter XIII of the Gītā-Rahasya, at pp.574 to 582, to which the reader is referred. The means of attaining to the Parameśvara are referred to as 'vidyā' in the Upaniṣads; and it was usual to keep these Vidyās clothed in mystery. It is said here that the bhaktimārga (that is, the Path of Devotion, or the worship of the Perceptible) is a Vidyā, which is the king or the most superior of these mysterious Vidyās, and also that this religion, being something which is actually visible to the eyes, is easy to follow. Nevertheless, as this Yoga has come into vogue by the tradition of Ikṣvāku and the other kings (Gī. 4.2), it may also be said to be the path followed by Rajas or

eminent persons, and to be a 'rājavidyā' also in that sense. Whichever meaning is taken, it is quite clear that this stanza does not refer to the Knowledge of the immutable or the imperceptible Brahman; and that the word 'rājavidyā' indicates in this place the Path of Devotion. Having in this way praised this path of life, to start with, the Blessed Lord now describes it at length –]

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§§ मया ततमिदं सर्वं जगदव्यक्तमूर्तिना ।  
मत्स्थानि सर्वभूतानि न चाहं तेष्ववस्थितः ॥ 9.4 ॥  
न च मत्स्थानि भूतानि पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ।  
भूतभृन्न च भूतस्थो ममात्मा भूतभावनः ॥ 9.5 ॥  
यथाकाशस्थितो नित्यं वायुः सर्वत्रगो महान् ।  
तथा सर्वाणि भूतानि मत्स्थानीत्युपधारय ॥ 9.6 ॥

(9.4) I have occupied or pervaded this universe by My imperceptible form. All created beings are in Me, I am not in them;

(9.5) and at the same time, all created beings are not in Me! See this My divine Action or power of Yoga! My Ātman, which created (these) created things, although it is embodied in the created things, (yet,) is not in them;

(9.6) just as, the great vāyu (atmosphere), which reaches every-where, is perpetually in space, so are all created things in Me, this believe.

[This apparent contradiction in terms results from the Parameśvara being qualityless as also qualityful (see my commentary on stanza 12 of Chapter VII of the Gītā, as also Gītā-Rahasya, Chapter IX, pp.281, 285, 286, and 287). Having in this way excited the curiosity of Arjuna, by giving him a surprising description of His own form, the Blessed Lord now again describes here how the universe is created from Him, and which His perceptible forms are, which (descriptions) are slightly different from those given above in Chapters VII and VIII of the Gītā (Gī. 7. 4 – 18; 8. 17 – 20). Although the word 'yoga' is interpreted as meaning some supernatural power or device, yet, this Yoga or device for transforming the Imperceptible into the Perceptible is nothing but Māyā, as has been proved in my commentary on Gītā 7.25, and in Chapter IX of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.325 to 330). As this Yoga is very easy for the Parameśvara, nay even His slave, He is referred to as the 'Lord of Yoga' (yogeśvara), (Gī. 18.75). The Blessed Lord now explains how the transformations of the universe are carried on by the power of this Yoga –]

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§§ सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिकाम्।

कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजाम्यहम् ॥ 9.7 ॥

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।

भूतग्राममिमं कृत्स्नमवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ॥ 9.8 ॥

न च मां तानि कर्माणि निबद्धन्ति धनंजय ।

उदासीनवदासीनमसक्तं तेषु कर्मसु ॥ 9.9 ॥

मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।

हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥ 9.10 ॥

(9.7) At the end of a kalpa, O Kaunteya! all created beings are merged into My Prakṛti; and in the beginning of a kalpa, (that is, at the beginning of the day of Brahmadeva), I Myself create them again.

(9.8) Taking in hand My own Prakṛti, I create again and again all this collection of created beings, which has become avaśa (that is, dependent, or, in other words, bound by its respective Karma) as a result of its having become subject to (that) Prakṛti.

(9.9) (But) O Dhanañjaya! as I am not attached to this My Action (of creating the universe), and as I live like an 'udāsin' (that is, apathetically ~Translator.), these Actions do not bind Me.

(9.10) Becoming the adhyakṣa (that is, Superintendent-Translator.), I cause Prakṛti to give birth to the moveable and immoveable universe. By reason of this, O Kaunteya! the make and break of this world is going on.



[ It has been stated in the previous chapter that the perceptible universe begins to come to birth out of the imperceptible Prakṛti, when the day of Brahmadeva (that is, the kalpa) starts (8.18); but, as the Parameśvara gives to everyone a good or bad birth according to his own Karma, the Blessed Lord has explained here that He Himself is untouched by (that is, is not responsible for) this Karma. In a scientific exposition, all these principles are stated in one and the same place; but as the catechismal system has been adopted in the Gītā, the same subject has been dealt with partly in one place and partly in another place, as occasion arose. Some commentators have raised a point

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that the words "jagad viparivartate" used in the 10th stanza have reference to the Vivartavāda (See p.331 in Chap. IX of the Gītā-Rahasya~Translator.). But I do not think that the word 'viparivartate' means anything more than that "the make and break of this world is going on" or, that "the Perceptible is transformed into the Imperceptible, and the Imperceptible re-transformed into the Perceptible"; and even the Śāṅkarabhāṣya does not say that anything more is meant. How a man becomes 'avaśa' (that is, dependent), as a result of Karma, has been explained in Chapter X of the Gītā-Rahasya, to which the reader is referred –]

§§ अवजानन्ति मां मूढा मानुषीं तनुमाश्रितम् ।

परं भावमजानन्तो मम भूतमहेश्वरम् ॥ 9.11 ॥

मोघाशा मोघकर्मणिो मोघज्ञाना विचेतसः ।

राक्षसीमासुरीं चैव प्रकृतिं मोहिनीं श्रिताः ॥ 9.12 ॥

(9.11) Those foolish people, who do not realise my parama (that is, super-excellent ~Translator.) form, namely, that I am the Highest Īśvara of all created beings, do not pay respect to Me, Who have taken a human form, (considering Me to be human-formed).

(9.12) Their hopes are futile; (their) Actions, useless; (their) Knowledge, barren; (their) Mind misguided; and they have given shelter to a devilish .and ungodly temperament, based on Ignorance.

[ This is the description of the ungodly person; now the Blessed Lord describes the godly (daivi) nature –]

§§ महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थ दैवीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः ।

भजन्त्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम् ॥ 9.13 ॥

सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः ।

नमस्यन्तश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ॥ 9.14 ॥

(9.13) But, O Pārtha! those mahātmā-s (that is, noble souls~Translator.), who have taken shelter in a godly nature (prakṛti), realise and recognise (that) Me, Who am the supreme inexhaustible source of all created beings; and believing that there is no one else, worship Me;

(9.14) and being industrious,

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fixed of purpose, and continually steeped in Yoga, they continually praise Me and bow to Me, and worship Me with devotion.

ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते ।

एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ 9.15 ॥

(9.15) Similarly, others worship Me, Who am sarvatomukha (Hast is, all-facing ~Translator.), looking at Me on the basis of 'ekatva (that is, synthetically), or, on the basis of 'pṛthaktva' (that is, analytically), or in many other ways, by means of a Jñāna-yajña (that is, sacrifice by Knowledge ~Translator.)

[ The brief description given here of people of godly and ungodly natures has been amplified in Chapter XVI. As has been explained before, a Jñāna-yajña means, 'comprehending the form of the Parameśvara by Jñāna (Knowledge), and thereby acquiring Release'. (See my commentary of Gī. 4.33). But, this Knowledge of the Parameśvara can also be of different kinds, such as dualistic, non-dualistic, etc.; and therefore, the Jñāna-yajña, may Also be of many kinds; and stanza 15 says that, although the Jñāna-yajña may thus be of many kinds, yet, in as much as the Parameśvara is All-facing (viśvatomukha), He becomes the recipient of all these Yajñas.

It is clear from the words "on the basis of ekatva", and "on the basis of prthaktva", that these ideas were ancient, though the dvaita (Dualistic), advaita (non-dualistic), and viśiṣṭādvaita (qualified monistic) systems are modern. The Blessed Lord now further exhaustively deals with the one-ness and diversity of the Parameśvara referred to in this stanza, and also explains how the one-ness exists in the diversity—]

॥ अहं क्रतुरहं यज्ञः स्वधाहमहमौषधम् ।

मन्त्रोऽहमहमेवाज्यमहमग्निरहं हुतम् ॥ 9.16 ॥

(9.16) kratu (that is, the Yajña according to the Śrutis) is Myself; Yajña (that is, the Yajña according to the Smṛtis) is Myself; svadhā (that is, the food offered to one's ancestors

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in the death-anniversary ceremony) is Myself; auśadha (that is, the food prepared from vegetables for the purposes of a Yajña) is Myself; the hymns (chanted while offering sacrifice into the Yajña) are Myself; I (am) the clarified butter, I (am) the Fire; and, the offering, which is thrown into the Fire, is also Myself.

[The words 'kratu' and 'yajña' were originally synonymous; but, though the word 'yajña' acquired later on a wider significance, by being applied to the worship of the household deities, the worship of the household Fire, the feeding of guests, breath-

control, reciting prayers, and performing other ritual, the meaning of the word 'kratu' has not been extended. The Yajñas, such as the aśvamedha, etc., to which this word had been applied according to the Śruti religion, were the only Yajñas, which were even later on signified by it. It is, therefore, stated in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya that the word 'kratu' in this place should be taken to mean the Yajña according to the Śrutis, and that the word 'Yajña' should be taken to mean the Yajñas according to the Smṛtis; and the same meaning has been given by me above; because, if this distinction is not made, the words 'kratu' and 'yajña' will become synonymous, and the stanza will become liable to the fault of containing a meaningless repetition of the two words.]

पिताहमस्य जगतो माता धाता पितामहः ।

वेद्यं पवित्रमोङ्कार ऋक्साम यजुरेव च ॥ 9.17 ॥

गतिर्भर्ता प्रभुः साक्षी निवासः शरणं सुहृत् ।

प्रभवः प्रलयः स्थानं निधानं बीजमव्ययम् ॥ 9.18 ॥

(9.17) I (am) the father, mother, supporter (support), grand-father of this world; I am also all that which is holy, or which is knowable; and I am the OM-kāra, the R̥g-Veda, the Sāma-Veda and the Yajur-Veda;

(18) I (am) the Ultimate State (of all), the Maintainer (of all), the Overlord, the Witness, the Rest, the Refuge, the Friend, the Origin, the Destruction, the Existence, the Repository, and the Imperishable Seed.

तपाम्यहमहं वर्षं निगृह्णाम्युत्सृजामि च ।

अमृतं चैव मृत्युश्च सदसच्चाहमर्जुन ॥ 9.19 ॥

(9.19) I cause the Sun to shine, I restrain and let loose the-rein;  
(and) O Arjuna! I am Immortality as also Death; and the  
Imperishable as also the Perishable.

[A description of the form of the Parameśvara similar to this description has again appeared in detail in, Chapters X, XI, and XII. But the difference between the two descriptions is, that in this place instead of merely-mentioning the manifestations of the Parameśvara, there is a specific statement, that the relationship of the Parameśvara to all created beings in the world is like that of a father, a mother, a friend, etc. It must be borne in mind that though causing the rain to fall or preventing the rain from , falling, is either profitable or unprofitable from the human point of view, yet, scientifically speaking and essentially, both the acts are the acts of the Parameśvara. With this idea in mind, the Blessed Lord has said before (Gī. 7.12) that He Himself creates all the things which are sāttvika, rājasa or tāmasa ; and later on in Chapter XIV",. there is an exhaustive description of how diversity is created in this world as a result of the difference between the three constituents of Prakṛti. Looking at the matter from this point of view, the words 'sat' and 'asat' in the 19th stanza can also be

translated as meaning 'good' or 'bad'; and later on in the Gītā (Gī. 17.26 – 28), such a-meaning has once been given to those words. But the ordinary meaning of those words namely, 'sat' meaning; 'imperishable' and 'asat' meaning 'perishable' (Gī. 2.16) must have been meant here; and it would appear that this pair of opposites, namely, 'sat' and 'asat' must have been, inspired by the Nāsadīya-Sūkta in the same manner as the words 'mṛtyu' and 'amṛta'. Nevertheless, whereas in the Nāsadīya-Sūkta, the word 'sat' has been applied to the-visible world, the Gītā applies the word 'sat' to the Parabrahman, and the word 'asat' to the visible world; this is the difference (See Gī. Ra. Ch. IX, pp.336 – 339). But although there may be this terminological difference, yet,

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when the two words 'sat' and 'asat' are used together, they clearly include both the visible world and the Para-brahman. Therefore, in order to show that both the sat and the asat are the forms of the Parameśvara, although people might call this 'sat' and that 'asat', as a result of terminological difference, one may interpret this description by saying that a vague definition has been given of the words 'sat' and 'asat' in the expression 'I am both the sat and the asat', instead of defining those words (Gī. 11.37 and 13.12). The Blessed Lord now shows the difference between worshipping the forms of the Parameśvara looking upon Him as One, and worshipping such

forms looking upon Him as Diverse, though the forms of the Paramēśvara may thus be numerous –]

§§ त्रैविद्या मां सोमपाः पूतपापा यज्ञैरिष्ट्वा स्वर्गातिं  
प्रार्थयन्ते ।

ते पुण्यमासाद्य सुरेन्द्रलोक-मश्नन्ति दिव्यान्दिवि देवभोगान् ॥

9.20 ॥

ते तं भुक्त्वा स्वर्गलोकं विशालं क्षीणे पुण्ये मर्त्यलोकं  
विशन्ति ।

एवं त्रयीधर्ममनुप्रपन्ना गतागतं कामकामा लभन्ते ॥ 9.21 ॥

(9.20) The sinless (persons) and the somapī-s (that is, performers of the Soma-yajña), who are traividya (that is, who perform the ritual prescribed in the three Vedas, namely, the Ṛg, Yajuh, and Sāma); who, worshipping Me by means of a Yajña, entertain a desire to obtain heaven, reach the holy sphere of Indra, and enjoy the numerous divine enjoyments of the gods, in heaven.

(9.21) And when they have exhausted their merit, by enjoying that expansive heaven, they take birth again and come to the mortal world. In this way, those people, who observe the trayī-dharma (that is, the Śruti religion, consisting of Yajñas and Yāgas prescribed in the three Vedas), and who entertain a desire for desirable enjoyments, have to go backwards and forwards (from heaven).



[ The proposition that, although residence in heaven for some time becomes possible by worshipping various deities, and by performing such religious observances as Yajñas and Yāgas, one has to take birth again and come back to

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the mortal world when the acquired merit is over, has been mentioned several times before (Gī. 2.42 – 44; 4.34; 6.41; 7.23; 8.16 and 25). Release is not like that, but is permanent; that is to say, when once a person has reached the Parameśvara, the cycle of birth and death does not any more exist for him. The description of the happiness of heaven given in the Mahābhārata (Vana. 260) is similar. But a doubt may arise as to how the 'yoga-kṣema' (that is, security and prosperity in life ~Translator.), in the world will go on, if Yajñas and Yāgas are given up, seeing that the Yajñas and Yāgas are responsible for rain, etc., (see my commentary on Gī. 2.45 and Gī. Ra. pp.404 – 405). Therefore, the Blessed Lord gives a reply to that doubt, immediately after the above stanza –]

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।

तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥ 9.22 ॥

(9.22) Those none-other-worshipping persons, who, meditating (only) on Me, worship Me, of those perpetually

steeped-in-Yoga persons, I carry on the yoga-kṣema (that is, security and prosperity ~Translator.).

[ Even the Śāsvatakośa defines 'yoga-kṣema' by saying that 'getting the things one has not got' is 'yoga'; and 'protection of the things one has got' is 'kṣema' (see stanzas 100 and 292); the sum and substance of the expression is 'daily maintenance in worldly life'. The reader is referred to the explanation of what this means in the path of Karma-Yoga, given in Chapter XII of the Gītā-Rahasya (see pp.535 to 537). It has been similarly stated in the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine that:—

manīṣiṇo hi ye kecit yatayo mokṣadharmināḥ ।  
teṣāṃ vicchinnaṭṭṣṇānāṃ yogakṣemavaho hariḥ ॥  
(Ma. Bhā. Śān. 348. 72).

And it is also stated there that such persons, though they may be 'ekānta-bhakta-s', (that is, worshippers in solitude ~Translator.) belong, nevertheless, to the Path of Action, that is, they perform Action with a desireless frame of mind. The Blessed Lord now explains what happens to those persons

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who worship the Parameśvara, looking upon Him as diverse (that is, analytically ~Translator.)

§§ येऽप्यन्यदेवताभक्ता यजन्ते श्रद्धयान्विताः ।

तेऽपि मामेव कौन्तेय यजन्त्यविधिपूर्वकम् ॥ 9.23 ॥

अहं हि सर्वयज्ञानां भोक्ता च प्रभुरेव च ।

न तु मामभिजानन्ति तत्त्वेनातश्च्यवन्ति ते ॥ 9.24 ॥

(9.23) Even those, who, becoming faith-filled, and (becoming) devotees of other deities, perform sacrifice, they too, O Kaunteya! (indirectly) sacrifice to Me, though not in, the prescribed way;

(24) because, I am the recipient and the Lord of all Yajñas; but, as they do not understand-Me essentially, they slip.

[ See the explanation given by me in Chapter XIII of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.586 to 591) of the importance of the proposition laid down in these two stanzas. The principle that, whatever deity is taken, it is a kind of form of the Parameśvara, has been in vogue from very ancient times in the Vedic religion. For instance, it has been stated in the Ṛg-Veda that "ekam sad viprā bahudhā vadanty agniṃ yamaṃ mātariś vānamāhum" (Ṛg. 1. 164, 46), that is, "though the Parameśvara is only One, sages give Him such different names as, Agni, Yama, Mātariśvā (Wind)". And consistently with that doctrine, there is a description of the various manifestations of the Parameśvara in the next chapter though He is only One. So also in the Nārāyaṇīyopākhyāna of the Mahābhārata, after stating that the devotee, who performs Actions in solitude, is the most excellent one out of the four kinds of devotees, (see my commentary on Gī. 7.19), it is stated as follows.—

brahmāṇam kṣīṭikaṇṭhaṁ ca yāścānyā devatāḥ smṛtāḥ  
|

prabuddhacaryāḥ sevanto māmevaiṣyanti yat param  
|| (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 347.35.)

that is, "even those saints, who worship Brahmadeva or Śiva or the other deities, also ultimately come and reach Me"; and the ideas in the above stanzas in the Gītā have also been adopted in the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa (Bhāg. 10, pp.408 – 10).

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In the same way, it is again stated later on in the Nārāyaṇīyopākhyāna, that:—

ye yajanti pitṛṇ devān gurūnś caivātithīṁs tathā |  
gāś caiva dvijamukhyāṁś ca pṛthivīm mātaram tathā ||  
karmaṇā manasā vācā viṣṇum eva yajanti te | (Ma.  
Bhā. Śān. 345; 26,27).

that is, "those who worship deities, ancestors, preceptors, guests, Brahmins, cows, etc., indirectly worship only Viṣṇu." It is surprising that even the followers of the Bhāgavata religion should quarrel with the followers of Saivism, though the Bhāgavata religion itself thus clearly states that Devotion should be taken as the principle factor, and that the symbol in the form of a deity is a matter of minor importance, or that

though there may be a difference in the form of worship, yet, the worship is only of the One Parameśvara. To proceed: the Blessed Lord now explains how though the proposition, that whatever deity is worshipped, the worship is ultimately received by the Bhagavanta, is true, worshippers miss the Path of Release, as they do not realise that the deity is one and the same; and the Blessed Lord Himself gives different Fruits of Action to different persons according to their respective faith –]

यान्ति देवव्रता देवान्पितृन्यान्ति पितृव्रताः ।

भूतानि यान्ति भूतेज्या यान्ति मद्याजिनोऽपि माम् ॥ 9.25 ॥

(9.25) Those, who worship deities go to and are merged in the deities; those, who worship ancestors, in the ancestors? those, who worship (different) past beings, in (those respective) past beings; and those who worship Me, in Me.

[In short, although one Parameśvara alone pervades everything, yet, the fruit of the worship is of a higher or lower grade to everyone according to his respective faith.

Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten, that the act of giving the reward is not performed by the deity, but by the Parameśvara, as has been stated above (Gī. 7.20 – 23). The statement made above by the Blessed Lord, in the 24th stanza that, "I am the recipient of all Yajñas" means the

same thing. Even in the Mahābhārata, it is stated as follows:—

yasmin yasminś ca viṣaye yo yo yaṭi viniścayam ।  
sa tam evābhijānāti nānyam bharatasattama ॥ (Śān.  
352. 3);

that is, "on whatever form (bhāva) any man is fixed, he gets a fruit, which is conformable to that form"; and there is a Śruti text that "yaṁ yathā yathopāsate tad eva bhavati" (see my commentary on Gī. 8.6). After having described the state obtained by those, who worship the Parameśvara. analytically, in the first part of the stanza, the second part states that those, who worship the Blessed Lord with the faith that there is none other, are really merged in the Blessed Lord. The Blessed Lord now enunciates the important principle in the Path of Devotion, that He does not pay any attention to what His Devotee offers to Him, but merely takes into account his faith or devotion —]

§§ पत्रं पुष्पं फलं तोयं यो मे भक्त्या प्रयच्छति ।

तदहं भक्त्युपहृतमश्नामि प्रयतात्मनः ॥ 9.26 ॥

(9.26) Whoever with devotion, offers Me a leaf, or a flower,, or a fruit, or (according to his means) even a little water, that devotional offering of that 'prayatātmā' (that is, person. with a regulated Mind), I accept (gladly).

[The above stanza enunciates the devotional transformation of the principle of Karma-Yoga, that "the Reason is superior to the Action" (See Gī. Ra. Chap. XV, pp.668 to 672). In this connection, the tradition of the boiled rice offered by Sudāmā to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is well-known; and in the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa, this stanza has appeared in the Sudāmācaritopākhyāna itself (Bhāg. 10. U. 81.4). Having a large or a small quantity of the material for worship, is not subject to the control of a person, under all circumstances, and at all times. It is, therefore, said in the Śāstras, that the Blessed Lord is satisfied, not only with whatever little material for worship may be available according to one's means, but even by the mental material of worship offered with a pure mind. The Blessed Lord

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does not crave for materials of worship, but is concerned only with Devotion. This is the most important difference between the Mīmāṃsā Path and the Path of Devotion. For performing Yajñas and Yāgas, it is necessary to spend a lot of money, and also many other things have got to be done; but the devotional sacrifice can be performed even with a single leaf of the tulsi plant. There is an incident described in the Mahābhārata of Draupadī having performed this kind of Yajña when Durvāsa had come as a guest to her place, and having thereby pleased the Blessed Lord. To proceed: the Blessed Lord now advises Arjuna to perform various Actions in the way, in which the

devotee of the Blessed Lord performs them; and explains to him what is obtained by doing so—]

§§ यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत् ।

यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम् ॥ 9.27 ॥

शुभाशुभफलैरेवं मोक्ष्यसे कर्मबन्धनैः ।

संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि ॥ 9.28 ॥

(9.27) O Kaunteya! whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you offer as sacrifice, whatever you give, whatever austerity you perform, dedicate all that to Me.

(9.28) Acting thus, (even performing Actions), you will be free from the bonds of Action, in the shape of a good or evil result; and, becoming a 'yuktātmā' (that is, pure-hearted), and (becoming) Released, by means of this Yoga of Renunciation, (of the Fruit of Action), you will come and reach Me.

[ From this it becomes quite clear, that even the Devotee of the Blessed Lord (the bhagavadbhakta) has to perform all Actions, with the idea of dedicating them to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and that he cannot give up Action; and from this point of view, these two stanzas are important. The principle of the Jñāna-Yajña, namely, "brahmārpaṇam brahma haviḥ" (Gī. 4.24), has now been enunciated in the 27th stanza in the terminology of Devotion. (See Gī. Ra. Ch. XIII, pp.602 to 604). The Blessed Lord has advised Arjuna already in Chapter III that: "mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi



saṁnyasya" (Gī. 3. 30), that is, "making a Renunciation of all Action in Me – fight"; and in Chapter V, the Blessed Lord has again said, that the person, who performs Actions unattachedly, dedicating them to the Brahman, is not affected by the Action (5.10). This is true Renunciation according to the Gītā (Gī. 18.2); and, one who performs all Actions, in this way, giving up (saṁnyasya) the Hope for Fruit of Action, is a 'nitya-saṁnyāsin' (perpetual ascetic), (Gī. 5.3). The Gītā does not approve of Renunciation in shape of the Abandonment of Action. It has been stated in various places before, that performing Actions in this way, is not obstructive of Release (Gī. 2.64; 3.19; 4.23; 5.12; 6.1; 8.7); and, the same thing has been repeated here in the 28th stanza. In the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa, the Nṛsiṁha-formed Lord has advised Prahlaḍa as follows namely, "mayyāveśya manastāt kuru karmāṇi matparaḥ", that is, "perform all Actions, fixing your mind on Me" (Bhāg. 7.10.23); and later on, in the 11th skandha, the principle of Yoga by Devotion has been enunciated by saying, that the Devotee of the Blessed Lord should dedicate all Actions to Nārāyaṇa (See Bhāg. 11.2.36 and 11.11.24). To proceed: it has been stated in the beginning of this chapter that the Path of Devotion is pleasant and easy. The Blessed Lord now describes the other great special quality of that Path, namely, Equability, as follows:—]

§§ समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः ।

ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम् ॥ 9.29 ॥

अपि चेत्सुदुराचारो भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।

साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः ॥ 9.30 ॥

(9.29) I am the same towards all created beings; to Me (there) is not (someone, who is) dvesya (that is, un-liked), nor (someone, who is) priya (that is, dear). But, those who worship Me with devotion, I am embodied in them, and they are embodied in Me.

(9.30) Be he a great evil-doer, yet, if he worships Me with the faith that there is no one else, then he must be considered a saint; because, the determination

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his Reason is proper.

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शश्वच्छान्तिं निगच्छति ।

कौन्तेय प्रति जानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥ 9.31 ॥

(9.31) He soon becomes a 'dharmātmā' (that is, 'a pious soul' ~Translator.); and attains eternal tranquility. O Kaunteya! know this to be certain, that no devotee of mine is (ever) destroyed.

[The third stanza is not to be understood as meaning that the Blessed Lord loves his devotee, even if he is an evil-doer. All that the Blessed Lord says is that, even if a man is an evil-doer in the beginning, yet, when his mind has become definitely directed towards the Parameśvara, he cannot afterwards perform any evil Action; and, that he gradually becomes a pious soul (dharmātmā), and attains Perfection; and by such Perfection, his sin is ultimately fully destroyed. In short, the proposition stated in Chapter VI, that even if a man is merely inspired by the desire to know what Karma-Yoga is, he becomes helpless, as if he was put into a grinding-mill, and gradually goes beyond the fruit-promising ritualism (śabda-brahma), is now made applicable to the Path of Devotion. The Blessed Lord now explains more clearly how He is equable towards all created beings –]

मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः ।

स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ॥ 9.32 ॥

किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणाः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा ।

अनित्यमसुखं लोकमिमं प्राप्य भजस्व माम् ॥ 9.33 ॥

(9.32) Because, O Pārtha! taking shelter in Me, women, Vaiśyas, Śūdras, and others born in a sinful class (such as the lowest classes, etc.) obtain the highest state;

(9.33) then, all the more so, those, who are holy Brahmins and also King-Sages (i.e., 'rājaṛṣi-s' ~Translator.), (Kṣatriyas), who are My devotees. As you are living in this transient and

unhappy (that is, painful) mortal world, do you be devoted to Me.

[ Some commentators have said that the word 'pāpayoni' in the 32nd stanza is not independent, but applies equally to

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women, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras, because no one is born as a woman, or a Vaiśya, or a Śūdra, unless he has committed some sin in previous births. According to them, the word 'pāpayoni' is a common word, and women, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras, are specific divisions of such pāpayoni, given by way of illustration. But this interpretation is not correct according to me. The word 'pāpayoni' indicates such tribes as are referred to as 'criminal tribes' in present legislation; and, the doctrine laid down in these stanzas is, that people belonging to even these classes obtain Perfection by means of Devotion to the Blessed Lord. Women, Vaiśyas, and Śūdras do not come under these tribes, and their difficulty in obtaining Release, is that they are not authorised to hear the Vedas; and it is, therefore, stated in the Bhāgavata-Purana that:—

strī śūdra dvija-bandhūnām trayī na śrutigocarā ।

karmaśreyasi mūḍhānām śreya evam bhaved iha ।

iti bhāratam ākhyātam kṛpayā muninā kṛtam ॥ (Bhāg.  
1.4.25)

that is, "in order that women, Śūdras, and the nominal Brahmins of the Kali-Yuga (i.e., the present age), who do not get a chance of hearing the Vedas, should not remain ignorant, the sage Vyāsa has benevolently and intentionally written the Mahābhārata, – and necessarily also the Gītā – for their benefit". The above stanzas from the Bhagavadgītā have, with minor alterations of reading, also appeared in the Anugītā (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 19.61, 62). The true worth of this royal road of Devotion to the Blessed Lord, which gives a good final state to all, without considering the difference between castes, or between classes, or between women and men, or between persons of black or white colour., will become fully intelligible to anyone who considers the history of the Mahārāṣṭra saints. A fuller explanation of the above stanza has been given in Chapter XIII of the Gītā-Rahasya at pp.613 to 618, to which the reader is referred. The advice given to Arjuna in the latter part of the 33rd stanza, to follow this religion of Devotion, is continued in the 34th stanza.]

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§§ मन्मना भव मद्रक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।

मामेवैष्यसि युक्तवैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः ॥ 9.34 ॥

(9.34) Keep your mind fixed on Me, become My devotee, worship Me, offer sacrifice to Me, and bow down before Me.

When, becoming thus devoted to Me, you perform your Yoga, you will come and reach Me.

[Strictly speaking, this advice has been started in the 33rd stanza. The word 'anitya', in the 33rd stanza, has been used consistently with the Metaphysical doctrine, that the expansion of Prakṛti, or the Name-d and Form-ed visible world, is non-permanent; and, that the Ātman, or the Paramātmā alone is permanent; and the word 'asukha' echoes the proposition, that there is more of unhappiness than of happiness in this life. Yet, this description does not pertain to the Philosophy of the Absolute Self, but to the Path of Devotion; and, that is why, instead of using the words 'parabrahman' or 'paramātmā', the Blessed Lord has used words indicative of the first person, with reference to His perceptible form, and said "Worship Me, keep your Mind concentrated on Me, and bow down before Me"; and advised Arjuna, that, if he thus performed this Yoga or Karma-Yoga, with Devotion, and becoming attached to Him, (Gī. 7.1), he would be free from the bonds of Action, and ultimately come and be merged in Him; and that is-the final admonition of the Blessed Lord. And the same advice has been repeated later on at the end of Chapter XI. This is, indeed, the mystic import of the whole of the-Gītā. The only difference is, that it has once been expressed from the Metaphysical point of view, and at another time, from the Devotional point of view.]

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे

श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे राजविद्याराजगुह्ययोगो नाम  
नवमोऽध्यायः ॥ ९ ॥

Thus ends the ninth chapter named RAJVIDYA-RAJAGUHYA Yoga in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman, (that is, the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

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# CHAPTER X – VIBHŪTI-YOGA.

दशमोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER X.

[The description of the royal road in the shape of the -worship of the Perceptible, prescribed by the Blessed Lord for acquiring Karma-Yoga in the last chapter, is continued in this chapter; and in reply to the question of Arjuna, He gives in the end a description of the various perceptible forms or manifestations (vibhūti) of the Parameśvara; and hearing this description, Arjuna is filled with the desire of seeing the Form of the Parameśvara with his own eyes; therefore, in the next, that is, the eleventh chapter, the Blessed Lord has shown him His Cosmic Form, and satisfied his ambition.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

§§ भूय एव महाबाहो शृणु मे परमं वचः ।

यत्तेऽहं प्रीयमाणाय वक्ष्यामि हितकाम्यया ॥ 10.1 ॥

न मे विदुः सुरगणाः प्रभवं न महर्षयः ।

अहमादिर्हि देवानां महर्षीणां च सर्वशः ॥ 10.2 ॥

यो मामजमनादिं च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम् ।



असंमूढः स मर्त्येषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते ॥ 10.3 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(10.1) Mahābāho! to you, who are gratified (by My speech), I am once more describing (one) excellent thing, for your benefit, to which listen.

(10.2) My origin is not understood even by the multitude of gods, or by great Ṛṣis; because, I am, indeed, in every way, the Fundamental cause of the gods and the great Ṛṣis.

(10.3) He, who realises that I am the Great Īśvara of all spheres, (such as, the earth, etc.), and that there is no birth or origin for Me, he alone, among all men, becoming free from Ignorance, becomes free from all sins.

[ The idea that the Parabrahman, or the Blessed Lord, was in existence even before the gods, and that the gods came afterwards, is to be found in the Nāsadiya-Sūkta in the Ṛg-Veda (See Gī. Ra. Ch. IX, p.351). To proceed: this

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is, so far, the introduction; the Blessed Lord now explains how He is the Great Īśvara of all —]

॥ बुद्धिर्ज्ञानमसंमोहः क्षमा सत्यं दमः शमः ।

सुखं दुःखं भवोऽभावो भयं चाभयमेव च ॥ 10.4 ॥

अहिंसा समता तुष्टिस्तपो दानं यशोऽयशः ।

भवन्ति भावा भूतानां मत्त एव पृथग्विधाः ॥ 10.5 ॥

(10.4) Reason, Knowledge, Non-delusion, forgiveness, Truth, sensual restraint, tranquility, happiness, unhappiness, 'bhāva' (that is, coming to life), 'abhāva' (that is, death), as also fear and fearlessness,

(10.5) harmlessness, equability, 'tuṣṭi' (satisfaction), austerity, charity, 'yaśa' (that is, glory—Translator.), 'ayaśa' (that is, disgrace ~Translator.), and other similar 'bhāva'-s (that is, temperaments) of all living beings, are born from Me alone.

[The word 'bhāva' means 'condition', 'state', or 'temperament'; and Sāṃkhya philosophy makes a distinction between the bhāva-s of Reason, and the bhāva-s of the Body. As the Spirit is non-active, and Reason is an evolute of Prakṛti according to the Sāṃkhyas, they say that the various conditions or bhavas of the Reason, existing in the Subtle Body (līṅga-śarīra) are responsible for the various births, as a bird or a beast, which the Subtle Body assumes (see Gī. Ra. Ch. VIII. p.261, and Sāṃ. Kā. 40 to 55); and most probably, these are the bhavas which have been referred to in the above two stanzas. But, as Vedānta says that there is only One Permanent Principle, in the shape of the Paramātmān, Which is beyond both Matter and Spirit, and that the entire visible universe comes to birth as a result of the desire to create the universe, which arises in the mind of that Paramātmān, as described in the Nāsadīya-Sūkta, even Vedāntists say, that all the created things in the world, which are embodied in in Māyā, are the Mental bhāva-s

of the Parabrahman (see the next stanza). The words  
'austerity', 'charity'

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'Yajña' [1] etc., are to be understood as the frames of mind  
indicating faith in those things. To proceed: the Blessed Lord  
now says that –]

महर्षयः सप्त पूर्वे चत्वारो मनवस्तथा ।

मद्भावा मानसा जाता येषां लोक इमाः प्रजाः ॥ 10.6 ॥

(10.6) The seven Great Ṛṣis, the former Four, as also the  
Manu-s from whom this generation was created in this 'loka'  
(that is, world ~Translator.), are My mental (that is, 'created by  
the Mind') 'bhāva'-s (that is, 'states' ~Translator.).

[Although the words used in this stanza are easy, yet, there is  
great difference of opinion between the commentators about  
the legendary personages to whom this stanza refers.

Especially the explanation as to the terms to which the words  
"the former" and the word "Four" are to be applied, has been  
given by different commentators in different ways. The seven  
Maharṣis (i.e., "Great Ṛṣis") are well-known; but one kalpa of  
Brahmadeva consists of 14 Manvantaras (See Gī. Ra. p.264);  
and for each of these Manvantaras, the Manu, the deity, and

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[1] The word 'Yajña' appears in the author's text; but I think 'yaśa' is meant,  
as that is the word used in this stanza of the Gītā. ~Translator.

the seven Ṛṣis were different (See Harivaṁśa 1.7; Viṣṇu. 3.1, and Matsya. 9). Therefore, some commentators have taken the words "the former" as an adjective qualifying the 'Seven Maharṣis'; and have explained the stanza by saying that the seven Maharṣis of the Cākṣuṣa Manvantara, that is, of the Manvantara previous to the present Vaivasvata Manvantara, are indicated here. These seven Ṛṣis were Bhṛgu and others, namely, Bhṛgu, Nabha, Vivasvān, Sudhāmā, Virajā, Atināmā, and Sahiṣṇu. But according to me, this interpretation is not correct; because, there seems no reason to say anything in this context about the seven Great Ṛṣis in the Manvantara, previous to the present one, that is, Vaivasvata Manvantara, in which the Gītā. was told. Therefore, one must take the seven Ṛṣis to be those of the present Manvantara. Their names have been mentioned in

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the Nārāyaṇīyopākhyāna of the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata as: Marīci, Aṅgīrasa, Atri, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, and Vaśiṣṭha (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 335.28, 29; 340.64 and 65); and in my opinion those are the seven Ṛṣis who are indicated here; because, it is the Nārāyaṇīya or Bhāgavata religion, with its relative ritual, which has been supported in the Gītā (See Gī. Ra. pp.12 and 13). However, it must be mentioned here that the names of the seven Ṛṣis mentioned above, namely, Marīci, etc., are sometimes found started from Bhṛgu instead of from

Aṅgīrasa; and in some places, there is even a description that the seven Ṛṣis of the present Yuga are Kaśyapa, Atri, Bharadvāja, Viśvāmitra, Gautama, Jamadagni, and Vaśiṣṭha {Viṣṇu. 3.1.32 and 33; Matsya. 9.27 and 28; Ma. Bhā. Anu. 93. 21). In the Viṣṇu-purāṇa, Bhṛgu and Dakṣa have been added to these seven Ṛṣis, namely, Marīci and the others, so as to make out nine (Viṣṇu. 1.7.5. 6); and one more, namely, Nārada has again been added to those nine in the Manu-Smṛti in describing the ten Mind-born sons (mānasa-putra) of Brahmadeva (Manu. 1. 34, 35); and the etymology of the words Marīci, etc., has been given in Bhārata (Ma. Bhā. Anu. 85). But, as we have to see for the present only which these seven Great Ṛṣis were, it is not necessary to consider here those nine or ten Mind-born sons or the etymological significance of their names. It is quite clear that the words "the Former" cannot be interpreted as meaning the seven Ṛṣis of the previous Manvantara. Let us now see to what extent the interpretation of some commentators, who have taken the words "the former Four" as referring to the word 'Manu'-s is correct. There are in all fourteen Manvantaras, of which there are fourteen Manus; and these are sub-divided into two classes of seven each. The first seven are called Svāyambhuva, Svārocīṣa, Auttamī, Tāmasa, Raivata, Cākṣuṣa, and Vaivasvata; and they are referred to as 'Svāyambhuva and others' (Manu. 1.62 and 63). Of these, the first six Manus are over; and the seventh, that is to say, the Vaivasvata Manu, is now going on.

When this Manu is over, the seven subsequent Manus (Bhāg, 8.13.7) are

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called the Sāvarṇi Manus. Their names are, Sāvarṇi, Dakṣa-Sāvarṇi, Brahma-Sāvarṇi, Dharma-Sāvarṇi, Rudra-Sāvarṇi, Deva-Sāvarṇi, and Indra-Sāvarṇi (Viṣṇu. 3.2; Bhāgavata. 8.13; Harivaṁśa, 1.7). Considering that there are seven Manus in each class, it cannot be explained why the Gītā should have referred only to "the former Four", that is to say, the "first four" only from either class. On account of the tradition in the Brahmāṇḍa-Purāṇa, that out of the Sāvarṇi Manus, the four after the first one, namely, the Dakṣa-, Brahma-, Dharma-, and Rudra-Sāvarṇi Manus, were all created at the same time, some commentators say that the Gītā refers to these four Sāvarṇi Manus. But to this suggestion, an objection is taken by others that as the Sāvarṇi Manus are all to come in the future, the words "from whom this generation was created in this world", which are indicative of the past tense, cannot be applied to the Sāvarṇi Manus, which are to come in the future. In short, the words "the former Four" cannot be taken to refer to the word "Manus". Therefore, the words "the former Four" must be taken to have independent, reference to some former four Ṛṣis, or four personages; and-if you say so, the question who these "former Four" were, naturally arises. Those commentators, who have interpreted this stanza in that way,

say that these "former Four" were the four Ṛṣis named Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana, and Sanatkumāra (Bhāg. 3.12, 4). But, to this interpretation, there is the objection that although these four Ṛṣis were the Mind-born sons of Brahmadeva, yet, as they were Saṁnyāsins from birth, they refused to raise progeny; and, on that account, Brahmadeva had got angry with them (Bhāg. 3. 12; Viṣṇu. 1. 7); and, therefore, the sentence "from whom this generation was created in this world – "yeṣāṁ loka imāḥ prajāḥ" – cannot under any circumstances be applied to the Ṛṣis. Besides, although it is stated in the Purāṇas, that these Ṛṣis were four, yet, in the Bhārata, in the Nārāyaṇīya, that is, the Bhāgavata doctrine, Sana, Kapila, and Sanatsujāta have been added to these four, and these seven Ṛṣis are said to be the Mind-born sons of Brahmadeva; and it is stated that they

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followed the Path of Renunciation from birth (Ma. Bhā. 340.67.68). Besides, even if the Ṛṣis are thus taken to be seven, that is, Sanaka and others, yet, there seems to be no reason why only four of these should have been referred to here. Then, who are these "former Four"? In, my opinion, the answer to this question must be given from, the legendary stories pertaining to the Nārāyaṇīya, or, the Bhāgavata religion; because, in my opinion, it is-unquestionable that the Bhāgavata doctrine alone is supported in the Gītā. Now, if one

considers the Bhāgavata. conception of the creation of the universe, the four entities Vāsudeva (Ātman), Saṁkarṣaṇa (Jīva), Pradyumna (Mind), and Aniruddha (Individuation) had come into existence-before the seven Ṛṣis; and, it is there stated that, from the-last of them, namely, from Aniruddha, that is, from Brahmadeva, the Mind-born sons Marīci, etc., came to be born (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 339.34 to 40 and 60 to 72; 340.27 to 31). The four entities, Vasudeva, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and. Aniruddha, are collectively known as the 'Caturvyūha'; and whereas one sect of the Bhāgavata doctrine says that these four entities were all independent of each other, other sects look upon two or three, out of these four, as the more important ones. But, these conceptions are not acceptable to the Bhagavadgītā, which pertains to the 'Ekavyūha' school, that is, which is of the opinion that the four Vyūhas and everything else was created from 'eka' or One, Parameśvara, as has been shown by me in the Gītā-Rahasya (Gī. Ra. p.266 and 756). It is, therefore, stated in this stanza, that the four entities, Vasudeva, etc., forming the 'Caturvyūha' are not independent of each other, and that all these four Vyūhas are the bhāva-s or 'states' of One Parameśvara, that is, of the All-pervading. Vasudeva (Gī. 7.19). Looking at the matter from this point of view, it will be seen that the words "the former Four" have reference to the Caturvyūha of Vāsudeva and the others, who had come into existence before the Seven Ṛṣis according to the Bhāgavata religion. It has been stated in



the Bhārata itself, that the distinction between the four Vyūhas according to the Bhāgavata religion was

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In vogue from former times (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 348. 57); this idea is not something new invented by me. In short, on the authority of the Nārāyaṇīyopākhyāna of the Bhārata, I interpret "the seven Maharṣis", to mean, Marīci and others; "the former Four", to mean, Vasudeva and others forming the Caturvyūha; and 'Manu-s', to mean, the six previous Manus, and the seventh Manu then current, making up the Svāyāmbhuva group of Manus. The idea of looking upon the four entities, namely, Aniruddha, (that is, Individuation), and the others, as the sons of the Parameśvara is also to be found in another place in the Bhārata (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 311. 7, 8). The bhava-s or mental states of the Parameśvara have thus been mentioned. The Blessed Lord now explains the result of worshipping Him, after one has realised this fact –]

§§ एतां विभूतिं योगं च मम यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।

सोऽविकम्पेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः ॥ 10.7 ॥

अहं सर्वस्य प्रभवो मत्तः सर्वं प्रवर्तते ।

इति मत्वा भजन्ते मां बुधा भावसमन्विताः ॥ 10.8 ॥

मच्चित्ता मद्गतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।

कथयन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥ 10.9 ॥

तेषां सततयुक्तानां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।

ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते ॥ 10.10 ॥

(10.7) He, who understands the principle of this my 'vibhūti' (that is, manifestation) and this my Yoga (that is, device or power by which I cause this manifestation), undoubtedly attains the permanent (Karma-) Yoga.

(10.8) Wise men, realising that I am the Origin of everything, and that all things spring from Me, become imbued with My bhāva-s (that is, states ~Translator.) and thus worship Me.

(10.9) Concentrating their minds on Me, fixing their life on Me, giving counsel to each other and telling each other legends about Me, they are always happy and engrossed (in doing that).

(10.10) To those, who thus always remaining 'yukta' (that is, content), worship Me, I give the Yoga of the (Equable) Reason,

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which enables them to come and reach Me.

तेषामेवानुकम्पार्थमहमज्ञानजं तमः ।

नाशयाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥ 10.11 ॥

(11) And in order to bestow favour on them, I enter their 'ātmabhāva' (that is, their Inner Sense); and by the brilliant

Lamp of Knowledge, destroy the darkness born of Ignorance (in their Minds).

[ It has been stated above in Chapter VII that it is the Parameśvara Himself, Who creates the faith towards various deities (7.21); in the same way, it is now stated in the 10th stanza that the act of increasing Equability of Reason in persons, who have taken to the Path of Devotion, is performed by the Parameśvara Himself; and this proposition in the Path of Devotion is similar in meaning to the statement made above (Gī. 6.44) that once a man is inspired by a desire for Karma-Yoga, he is dragged towards complete perfection, as if he had been put into a grinding-mill. It is said that this capacity arises from Free Will according to the doctrine of Causality. But, even the Ātman is the Parameśvara; therefore, it is stated in the Doctrine of Devotion, that this Fruit or this Frame of Mind is given by the Parameśvara to each one according to his actions in previous births (Gī. 7.20 and Gī. Ra. Ch. XIII, p.596). After the Blessed Lord has in this way explained the principle underlying the Path of Devotion –]

अर्जुन उवाच

॥ परं ब्रह्म परं धाम पवित्रं परमं भवान् ।

पुरुषं शाश्वतं दिव्यमादिदेवमजं विभुम् ॥ 10.12 ॥

आहुस्त्वामृषयः सर्वे देवर्षिर्नारदस्तथा ।

असितो देवलो व्यासः स्वयं चैव ब्रवीषि मे ॥ 10.13 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(10.12) That You (are) the Highest Brahman, the most Exalted State, the most Sacred Thing, the Brilliant and the Permanent Spirit, the Highest Deity, the Unborn, the sarva-vibhu (that is, the All-pervading),

(10.13) is said with reference to You by all Ṛṣis, as also by the Devarṣi

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Nārada, by Asita, Devala, and even by Vyāsa; and You also tell me the same thing.

सर्वमेतदृतं मन्ये यन्मां वदसि केशव ।

न हि ते भगवन्व्यक्तिं विदुर्देवा न दानवाः ॥ 10.14 ॥

स्वयमेवात्मनात्मानं वेत्थ त्वं पुरुषोत्तम ।

भूतभावन भूतेश देवदेव जगत्पते ॥ 10.15 ॥

वक्तुमर्हस्यशेषेण दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।

याभिर्विभूतिभिर्लोकानिमांस्त्वं व्याप्य तिष्ठसि ॥ 10.16 ॥

कथं विद्यामहं योगिंस्त्वां सदा परिचिन्तयन् ।

केषु केषु च भावेषु चिन्त्योऽसि भगवन्मया ॥ 10.17 ॥

विस्तरेणात्मनो योगं विभूतिं च जनार्दन ।

भूयः कथय तृप्तिर्हि शृण्वतो नास्ति मेऽमृतम् ॥ 10.18 ॥

(10.14) Keśava! all this which You tell me, I look upon as true.  
O Blessed Lord! Your 'vyakti' (that is, Your origin) is known  
neither to the gods nor to the demons.

(10.15) O Bhūteśa, Who have created all these created beings!  
O God of gods, and Lord of the Universe 1 You alone are the  
one, O Puruṣottama! Who know Yourself!

(10.16) Therefore, those your divine manifestations, by which  
You have pervaded all these spheres, (please) describe all  
those in detail to me.

(10.17) O Yogin t how shall I Realise You, by continually  
meditating on You? and O Blessed Lord! in what different  
objects should I meditate on You? (Tell me that).

(10.18) O Janārdana! tell me again in full detail Your vibhūti-s  
(that is, manifestations) and Your Yoga, because, I cannot hear  
enough, of this (Your) nectar-like (conversation).

[ The words ' vibhūti' and 'yoga' have appeared in the 7th  
stanza of this chapter, and Arjuna has repeated them, here.  
See the meaning of the word 'Yoga' which has. been given  
before (Gī. 7.25). It must be borne in mind, as has been stated  
in the 17th stanza, that Arjuna's reason for asking about the  
different manifestations of the Blessed Lord was not in order  
to meditate on those different manifestations as deities, but in  
order to look upon all those different manifestations as being  
the All-Pervasive-

Parameśvara. Because, the Blessed Lord has already explained before that there is a world of difference, from the point of view of the Path of Devotion, between believing that there is only one Parameśvara in all places, and looking upon the different manifestations of the Parameśvara as different deities (Gī. 7.20 to 25, 9.32 to 28).]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

हन्त ते कथयिष्यामि दिव्या ह्यात्मविभूतयः ।

प्राधान्यतः कुरुश्रेष्ठ नास्त्यन्तो विस्तरस्य मे ॥ 10.19 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(19) Very well! Kuruśreṣṭha! I shall now describe to you the most important of My divine manifestations, because, there is no end to My expansion.

[ There are descriptions of the form of the Parameśvara in the Anuśāsanaparva (14.311 – 321). and in the Anu-Gītā (Aśva. 43 – 44), which are similar to the description of manifestations given here. But, as the description in the Gītā is sweeter than those given elsewhere, it seems to have been copied in the other places. For instance, a similar description of manifestations has been made in the 15th chapter of the eleventh skandha of the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa by the Blessed Lord to Uddhava; and it has been stated there (Bhāg. 11.16.6 – 8), that the description is similar to the description given in this chapter.]

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।

अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानामन्त एव च ॥ 10.20 ॥

आदित्यानामहं विष्णुर्ज्योतिषां रविरंशुमान् ।

मरीचिर्मरुतामस्मि नक्षत्राणामहं शशी ॥ 10.21 ॥

(10.20) O Guḍākeśa! I am the 'ātmā' (that is, Self~Translator.), which exists in the heart of all created beings; and I am also the origin, the middle, and the end of (all) created beings.

(10.21) I am the Viṣṇu among the (twelve) āditya-s (that is, Suns~Translator.); I am the radiating Sun, among the brilliant bodies; I am Marīci out of the (seven or forty-nine [1])

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Maruta-s; I (am) the Moon, among the lunar asterisms.

वेदानां सामवेदोऽस्मि देवानामस्मि वासवः ।

इन्द्रियाणां मनश्चास्मि भूतानामस्मि चेतना ॥ 10.22 ॥

(10.22) I am the Sama-veda, among the Vedas; (I) am Indra, among the gods; (I) am the Mind, among the senses; (1) am. the cetanā, (that is, the movement of vitality) in created beings.

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[1] In the 1915 edition of the text, these are stated to be thirty-nine.  
~Translator.

[ Just as it is stated here, that "I am the Sāma-Veda among the Vedas" that is to say, that the Sāma-Veda is the principal Veda, so also is it stated in the Anuśāsanaparva of the Mahābhārata (14. 317) that "sāmavedaś ca vedānāṃ yajuṣāṃ śatarudriyam". But in the Anu-gītā, supreme importance among the Vedas is given to the Om-kāra by the words "Om-kāraḥ sarva-vedānāṃ, etc." (Aśva. 44.6); and it has been stated in the Gītā itself, in a previous chapter (Gī. 7.8), that "praṇavaḥ sarvavedeṣu" (that is, "I am the praṇava (Om-kāra) in all the Vedas" ~Translator.). So also in the Gītā (9.17) a higher place has been given to the Ṛg-Veda than to the Sama-Veda by the words "ṛk-sāma-yajur eva ca"; and the ordinary belief is the same. As these statements have been looked upon as mutually contradictory, several persons have come out with different explanations about them. In the Chāndogyopaniṣad, the Om-kāra is given the name 'udgītha': and it is stated there, that this 'udgītha' is the summary of the Sama-Veda, and that the Sāma-Veda is the summary of the Ṛg-Veda (Chān. 1.1.2). This statement in the Chāndogya harmonises the various statements regarding which is the most superior among the Vedas; because, even in the Sama-Veda, the hymns have been taken from the Ṛg-Veda. But, some persons are not satisfied with that; and say that there must be some deep reason for giving prominence to the Sama-Veda in the Gītā in this place. Although the Sama-Veda has been given prominence in the Chāndogyopaniṣad, yet, Manu has said "the voice of the Sāma-Veda is impure" (Manu. 4.124). From this fact, one critic has drawn the inference that



the Gītā, which gives prominence to the Sāma-Veda, must be anterior in point of time to

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Manu; and another critic says that the writer of the Gītā was possibly a Sāma-Vedī; and that he has, on that account, given prominence to the Sāma-Veda. But, in my opinion, it is not necessary to go so far for giving a satisfactory explanation of the words "I am the Sāma-Veda among the Vedas". The worship or praise of the Parameśvara in the form of a song is always given prominence in the Path of Devotion. For instance, in the Nārāyaṇīya-dharma, Nārada has described the Blessed Lord as "vedeṣu sa purāṇeṣu sāṅgopāṅgeṣu gīyase" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 334. 23); Vasuraja has been described as 'singing' the 'jāpya': cf., "jāpyam jagau" (Śān. 337. 27; and 342. 70 and 81), by making use of the root 'gai' (to sing). There is, therefore, nothing to be surprised at in prominence being given in a devotional religion to the musical Sāma-Veda over the ritualistic Veda consisting of Yajñas and Yāgas; and in my opinion, this is the simple reason for saying "I am the Sāma-Veda among the Vedas".]

रुद्राणां शंकरश्चास्मि वित्तेशो यक्षरक्षसाम् ।

वसूनां पावकश्चास्मि मेरुः शिखरिणामहम् ॥ 10.23 ॥

पुरोधसां च मुख्यं मां विद्धि पार्थ बृहस्पतिम् ।

सेनानीनामहं स्कन्दः सरसामस्मि सागरः ॥ 10.24 ॥

महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्म्येकमक्षरम् ।

यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थावराणां हिमालयः ॥ 10.25 ॥

(10.23) And, among the (eleven) Rudras, I am Śaṅkara; Kubera, among the Yakṣa-rākṣasa-s; I am the Pāvaka, among the (eight) Vasū -s; I, the Meru among the (seven) mountains;

(10.24) O Pārtha! and understand that among the preceptors, I am the principal one, namely, Bṛhaspati; I (am) Skanda (Kārtikeya) among the commanders of armies; I am the Samudra (the ocean), among collections of water.

(10.25) I, Bhṛgu, among the great Ṛṣis; I am the one-syllabled sound 'om-kāra' in speech; I am the japa-yajña, among Yajñas; and from among the immoveable (that is, steady) things, I am the Himālaya;

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[ The sentence "I am the japa-yajña, among the Yajñas" is of importance. In the Anu-gītā, it is stated that "yajñānām hutam uttamam" that is, "out of the Yajñas, that Yajña, which consists of offering 'havi' (into the fire) is the most important " (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 44. 8); and the same is the opinion of Vedic ritualists; hut, as the nāma-yajña or the japa-yajña is of greater importance than the havir-yajña in the Path of Devotion, the words "yajñānām japa-yajñosmi" have appeared in the Gītā.

Manu has stated in one place (2.87) that:– "whatever else the Brahmin may do or not do, he attains Release by japa (silent meditation) alone. The reading in the Bhāgavata is "yajñānām brahmayajñ 'oham" –]

अश्वत्थः सर्ववृक्षाणां देवर्षीणां च नारदः ।

गन्धर्वाणां चित्ररथः सिद्धानां कपिलो मुनिः ॥ 10.26 ॥

उच्चैःश्रवसमश्वानां विद्धि माममृतोद्भवम् ।

ऐरावतं गजेन्द्राणां नराणां च नराधिपम् ॥ 10.27 ॥

आयुधानामहं वज्रं धेनूनामस्मि कामधुक् ।

प्रजनश्चास्मि कन्दर्पः सर्पाणामस्मि वासुकिः ॥ 10.28 ॥

अनन्तश्चास्मि नागानां वरुणो यादसामहम् ।

पितृणामर्यमा चास्मि यमः संयमतामहम् ॥ 10.29 ॥

(10.26) among the trees, the aśvattha (that is, the pipal) tree; Nārada, among the god-Rṣis; Citraratha, among the Gandharvas; Kapila Muni, among the Siddhas;

(10.27) and the Uccaiśravas horse, which came into existence at the time of the churning for nectar, among horses; know that I am all these; the airāvata, among the excellent elephants; and the king, among men.

(10.28) I, the sword, among instruments of war-fare; I am the kāma-dhenu among cows; and I am Kāma, which is responsible for the creation of progeny; I am Vāsuki among the serpents;

(10.29) I am Ananta among the nāga-s; I, Varuṇa, among the yādas, (that is, the aquatic creatures); and I am the aryamā among the ancestors; I am Yama, among those, who regulate.  
[ The meanings of Vāsuki as the 'king of serpents' and of Ananta as 'Śeṣa' are to be found in the Amarakośa,

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as also in the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Ādi. 35 – 39). But one cannot definitely say what the difference between nāga-s and serpents, is. In the Āstikopākhyāna of the Mahābhārata, these words have been used as synonymous; but the use of the words 'sarpa' and 'nāga' in this place, shows that two different kinds of the common class of serpents are intended. It is stated in Śrīdhara's commentary that the 'serpent' is poisonous, and the 'nāga', non-poisonous; and in the Rāmānujabhāṣya, the distinction is made by saying that serpents have only one head, and nāga-s have many heads; but, both these distinctions do not seem to me correct; because, in some places, in mentioning the important families among the nāga-s, Ananta and Vāsuki are both mentioned in the beginning; and both are described as being many-headed and poisonous, but Ananta is described as fire-coloured and Vāsuki as yellow-coloured. The reading in the Bhāgavata is the same as in the Gītā.]

प्रह्लादश्चास्मि दैत्यानां कालः कलयतामहम् ।

मृगाणां च मृगेन्द्रोऽहं वैनतेयश्च पक्षिणाम् ॥ 10.30 ॥

पवनः पवतामस्मि रामः शस्त्रभृतामहम् ।

झषाणां मकरश्चास्मि स्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नवी ॥ 10.31 ॥

सर्गाणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यं चैवाहमर्जुन ।

अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानां वादः प्रवदतामहम् ॥ 10.32 ॥

(10.30) And I am Prahlaḍa, among the demons; I, Kāla, among the swallows-up; and I, the 'mṛgendra' (that is, the lion) among the animals; and the eagle, among birds.

(10.31) I am the wind, among the speeders. I (am) Rāma, among arms-bearers; I am the alligator, among fishes; and the Bhāgīrathī, among the rivers.

(10.32) O Arjuna! I am the origin, the middle and the end of the entire creation; Metaphysics, among all sciences; I, the logic of all controversialists.

[ It has been stated in the 20th stanza above, that the Blessed Lord is the origin of all activated (sacetana) things; and He now says, that He is the beginning, middle, and

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end of the entire moveable and immoveable creation; this is the distinction.]

अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वन्द्वः सामासिकस्य च ।

अहमेवाक्षयः कालो धाताहं विश्वतोमुखः ॥ 10.33 ॥

मृत्युः सर्वहरश्चाहमुद्रवश्च भविष्यताम् ।

कीर्तिः श्रीर्वाक्च नारीणां स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिः क्षमा ॥ 10.34 ॥

(33) I am the akāra (the letter 'a'), among the letters; and among compounds, I am the (ubhaya-pada-pradhāna),. (that is, copulative ~Translator.) 'dvaṁdva'; I am the inexhaustible Time (such as, nimeṣa-muhūrta etc.); I am the 'sarvatomukha' (that is, having mouths or faces on all the four sides) 'dhātā' (creator ~Translator.) or Brahmadeva.

(34) I am death, the destroyer of all; and I am the origin of all to be born in the future; among females, I am fam, fortune, speech, 'smṛti' (that is, memory ~Translator.), 'medhā' (that is, intellect ~Translator.), 'dhṛti' (that is, courage~Translator.) and 'kṣamā' (that is, forgiveness ~Translator.).

[The words 'kīrti', 'śrī', 'vāk', etc., indicate the several respective deities. The five out of these, excepting speech and forgiveness, and the other five (puṣṭi, śraddhā, kriyā, lajjā, and mati, (that is, sound-bodiedness, faith, action, shame, and understanding), these ten are the daughters of Dakṣa; and, as they had been given in marriage to Dharma, they are all described as "dharma-patnī-s" in the Mahābhārata (Ādi. 66.13, 14).]

बृहत्साम तथा साम्नां गायत्री छन्दसामहम् ।

मासानां मार्गशीर्षोऽहमृतूनां कुसुमाकरः ॥ 10.35 ॥

(35) Similarly, among the Sāma, (that is, those Vedic-hymns, which are to be sung) I am the Bṛhatsāma; and among the metres, I am the Gāyatrī-metre; I am Mārgaśīrṣa among the months, and the Spring, among the six seasons.

[The first place has been given to the month of Mārgaśīrṣa among the months, because, it was usual in those days to start with the month of Mārgaśīrṣa in counting the months (Ma. Bhā. 3. Anu. 106 and 109; Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa 3.16).

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There is a similar reference in the Bhāgavata (11.16, 27). I have pointed out in my book called 'Orion' that the Mṛgaśīrṣa constellation is called the agrāhayaṇi, or, 'the constellation at the commencement of the year'; that, the Mṛga constellation must have got the first place, when the computation starting with the Mṛga constellation was in vogue, and that the Mārgaśīrṣa month must also have acquired importance later on, on that account; and I have to refer the reader to that book. I am not going into the matter here for fear of taking up space.]

द्यूतं छलयतामस्मि तेजस्तेजस्विनामहम् ।

जयोऽस्मि व्यवसायोऽस्मि सत्त्वं सत्त्ववतामहम् ॥ 10.36 ॥

वृष्णीनां वासुदेवोऽस्मि पाण्डवानां धनंजयः ।

मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशना कविः ॥ 10.37 ॥

दण्डो दमयतामस्मि नीतिरस्मि जिगीषताम् ।

मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम् ॥ 10.38 ॥

यच्चापि सर्वभूतानां बीजं तदहमर्जुन ।

न तदस्ति विना यत्स्यान्मया भूतं चराचरम् ॥ 10.39 ॥

नान्तोऽस्ति मम दिव्यानां विभूतीनां परन्तप ।

एष तूद्देशतः प्रोक्तो विभूतेर्विस्तरो मया ॥ 10.40 ॥

(10.36) I am the gambling, of those, who deceive; I, the brilliance of the brilliant; I am the victory (of the victorious)} and I, the determination (of those who are determined); and I, the faithfulness of the faithful.

(10.37) Among the Yādavas, I am Vāsudeva; among the Pāṇḍavas, Dhanañjaya; among the sages too, I am Vyāsa; and among the learned, I am Śukrācārya.

(10.38) I am the rod (of authority) of those, who punish; I am the nīti (that is, the diplomacy) of those, who desire success; and among (all) mysteries, I am silence. I am the knowledge of the knowers.

(10.39) Similarly, O Arjuna! I am the seed of all created beings; and there is not a single moveable or immoveable being, which can exist without Me.

(10.40) O Parantapa! there is no end to My divine manifestations; I have mentioned this expanse of My emanations merely directionally.



[ Having thus mentioned His principal emanations, the Blessed Lord now summarises the chapter –]

§§ यद्यद्विभूतिमत्सत्त्वं श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।

तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोऽशसंभवम् ॥ 10.41 ॥

अथवा बहूनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन तवार्जुन ।

विष्टभ्याहमिदं कृत्स्नमेकांशेन स्थितो जगत् ॥ 10.42 ॥

(10.41) Anything whatever, which is invested with power, glory, or splendour, has come into existence out of a portion of My brilliance.

(10.42) Or, O Arjuna! what use have you for knowing all this emanation? (To tell you the whole, in short) by (only) one portion of Myself, have I pervaded the whole of this Cosmos.

[ The last stanza is based on the ṛcā "pādosya viśvā bhūtāni tripādasyā 'mṛtam divi" (Ṛg. 10.90.3) from the Puruṣa-Sūkta; and this hymn has also appeared in the Chāndogyaopaniṣad (Chān. 3.12.6). The meaning of the word 'amśa' has been explained at the end of Chapter IX of the Gītā-Rahasya (see pp.338 to 343), to which the reader is referred. If the Blessed Lord has pervaded the whole of this universe with only a portion of Himself, it is quite clear that the entire emanation of the Blessed Lord must be still greater; and this last stanza has been added only to make that clear. In the Puruṣa-Sūkta, it is stated that "etāvān asya mahimā 'to jyāyāṁś ca pūruṣaḥ", that

is, "this is only a description of His greatness, the Puruṣa Himself is much greater than this".]

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे विभूतियोगो नाम दशमोऽध्यायः ॥ 10 ॥

Thus ends the tenth chapter entitled VIBHUTI-YOGA in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman, (that is, the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

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# CHAPTER XI – VIŚVA-RŪPA- DARŚANA YOGA.

एकादशोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER XI.

[After the Blessed Lord had described His own manifestations in the last chapter, Arjuna was filled with the desire of seeing this Cosmic Form (viśvarūpa); and the description given in this chapter of the Cosmic Form, shown by the Blessed Lord to Arjuna, at his request, is so entrancing that it is looked upon as an excellent part of the Gītā; and those who have written the other Gītās, have copied it. To begin with, Arjuna asks as follows –]

अर्जुन उवाच

§§ मदनुग्रहाय परमं गुह्यमध्यात्मसंज्ञितम् ।

यत्त्वयोक्तं वचस्तेन मोहोऽयं विगतो मम ॥ 11.1 ॥

भवाप्ययौ हि भूतानां श्रुतौ विस्तरशो मया ।

त्वत्तः कमलपत्राक्ष माहात्म्यमपि चाव्ययम् ॥ 11.2 ॥

एवमेतद्यथात्थ त्वमात्मानं परमेश्वर ।

द्रष्टुमिच्छामि ते रूपमैश्वरं पुरुषोत्तम ॥ 11.3 ॥

मन्यसे यदि तच्छक्यं मया द्रष्टुमिति प्रभो ।

योगेश्वर ततो मे त्वं दर्शयात्मानमव्ययम् ॥ 11.4 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(11.1) That greatest mysticism known as 'Adhyātma' (that is, Metaphysics ~Translator.), which You explained to me in order to show favour to me, has destroyed my ignorance.

(11.2) In the same way, O Thou with eyes like lotus-leaves! I have heard from You in detail about the origin and the end of all created beings and about (Your) inexhaustible greatness.

(11.3) (Now) O Parameśvara! as You have thus described Yourself, in that way, O Puruṣottama! I wish to see (actually) Your divine form.

(11.4) O Lord! if you think that it is possible for me to see such a form, then, O Yogeśvara! show me Your imperishable form.

[ Arjuna has, in the first stanza, signified by the word 'adhyātma', the Knowledge of the imperishable or the imperceptible form of the Parameśvara, which was described by the Blessed Lord in Chapters VII and VIII

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and the Knowledge of the various perceptible forms mentioned in Chap. IX and X, after He had started explaining Jñāna and Vijñāna in Chap. VII; and the words "the origin and the end of all created beings" in stanza 2, refer to the

description of how numerous perceptible objects come out of one Imperceptible, which has been given in Chap. VII (7.4 – 15), Chap. VIII (8. 16 – 21) and Chap. IX (9. 4 – 8). Some commentators consider the two halves of the third stanza as two independent sentences and interpret them as follows: " O Parameśvara! That description of Yourself, which You have given (of Your form) is true (that is, I have understood it). Now, O Puruṣottama, I desire to see Your divine form" (see Gī. 10.14). But, it is better to consider the two halves as making up one sentence; and that has been done in the Paramārthaprapā commentary. The word "yogeśvara" in the 4th stanza means "the Īśvara or Lord of Yoga", (not of Yogins), (Gī. 18.75). The interpretation of the word 'Yoga' as the power or device of creating the perceptible universe from the Imperceptible has appeared before (Gī. 7.25 and 9.5); and as the Blessed Lord is now going to show His Cosmic Form by the use of that power, the appellation 'Yogeśvara' seems to have been used here intentionally.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

§§ पश्य मे पार्थ रूपाणि शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः ।

नानाविधानि दिव्यानि नानावर्णाकृतीनि च ॥ 11.5 ॥

पश्यादित्यान्वसूत्रद्रानश्विनौ मरुतस्तथा ।

बहून्यदृष्टपूर्वाणि पश्याश्चर्याणि भारत ॥ 11.6 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(11.5) O Pārtha! look at these thousands and thousands of My forms of various kinds, of various colours, and of various sizes.

(11.6) See these (twelve) Suns, (eight) Vasus, (eleven) Rudras, (two) Aśvinīkumāras, as also (forty-nine) Marudgaṇas. O Bhārata! see these wonders which you have never before seen.

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[ The description of the Cosmic Form (viśvarūpa) shown to Nārada in the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine is more specific; and says that the twelve Suns were on the left side; the eight Vasus, in the front; the eleven Rudras, on the right side; and the Aśvinīkumāras, at the back (Śān. 339. 50 – 52). But this description does not seem to have been accepted everywhere (See Ma. Bhā. U. 130). The Ādityas, Vasus, Rudras, Aśvinīkumāras, and Marudgaṇas are Vedic deities, and a division into four classes among them has been made in the Mahābhārata by saying that the Ādityas were Kṣatriyas; the Marudgaṇas, Vaiśyas; and the Aśvinīkumāras, Sūdras (Śān. 208. 23, 24). See also Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa, 14.4.2.23.]

इहैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं पश्याद्य सचराचरम् ।

मम देहे गुडाकेश यच्चान्यद् द्रष्टुमिच्छसि ॥ 11.7 ॥

न तु मां शक्यसे द्रष्टुमनेनैव स्वचक्षुषा ।

दिव्यं ददामि ते चक्षुः पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम् ॥ 11.8 ॥

(11.7) O Guḍākeśa! the entire moveable and immoveable universe, which has been collected here to-day, and whatever else you may desire to see, see that in (this) My Form!

(11.8) But, with this vision of yours, you will not be able to see Me. Therefore, I am giving to you a supernatural vision; (by it) see this My divine Yoga (that is, Yogic Power).

सञ्जय उवाच

॥ एवमुक्त्वा ततो राजन्महायोगेश्वरो हरिः ।

दर्शयामास पार्थाय परमं रूपमैश्वरम् ॥ 11.9 ॥

अनेकवक्त्रनयनमनेकाद्भुतदर्शनम् ।

अनेकदिव्याभरणं दिव्यानेकोद्यतायुधम् ॥ 11.10 ॥

Sañjaya said:—

(11.9) Having spoken thus, Dhṛtarāṣṭra! the great Lord of Yoga, namely, Hari, showed to Arjuna {His} excellent divine form (that is, the Cosmic Form or viśvarūpa).

(11.10) To that (that is, to that Cosmic Form), there were innumerable mouths and eyes, and many wonderful sights were to be seen in it; (and) on it there

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were shining ornaments of numerous kinds and there were-  
erected (shining) in it numerous instruments of warfare.

दिव्यमाल्याम्बरधरं दिव्यगन्धानुलेपनम् ।

सर्वाश्चर्यमयं देवमनन्तं विश्वतोमुखम् ॥ 11.11 ॥

दिवि सूर्यसहस्रस्य भवेद्युगपदुत्थिता ।

यदि भाः सदृशी सा स्याद्भासस्तस्य महात्मनः ॥ 11.12 ॥

तत्रैकस्थं जगत्कृत्स्नं प्रविभक्तमनेकधा ।

अपश्यद्देवदेवस्य शरीरे पाण्डवस्तदा ॥ 11.13 ॥

ततः स विस्मयाविष्टो हृष्टरोमा धनंजयः ।

प्रणम्य शिरसा देवं कृताञ्जलिरभाषत ॥ 11.14 ॥

(11.11) To that, endless, all-facing and wonderful deity was applied an unguent of celestial smell, and it wore celestial flowers and clothes.

(11.12) If the effulgence of a thousand suns arose at once in the firmament, it would be somewhat like the brilliance of this great Ātman.

(11.13) Arjuna then saw that in this Body of the God of gods, the world, divided into numerous divisions, was to be seen synthesised.

(11.14) Then, being filled with surprise, the hairs on his body rose; and joining his hands and lifting them to his forehead, Arjuna said to the God—]

अर्जुन उवाच

§§ पश्यामि देवांस्तव देव देहे सर्वास्तथा भूतविशेषसंघान् ।



ब्रह्माण्मीशं कमलासनस्थ-मृषीश्च सर्वानुरगांश्च दिव्यान् ॥

11.15 ॥

अनेकबाहूदरवक्त्रनेत्रं पश्यामि त्वां सर्वतोऽनन्तरूपम् ।

नान्तं न मध्यं न पुनस्तवादिं पश्यामि विश्वेश्वर विश्वरूप ॥

11.16 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(11.15) O Lord! in this Your body, I can: see all the gods, and collections of various kinds of created beings, as also Brahmadeva, the lord (of all gods) seated on a lotus-seat, all Ṛṣis, and also all brilliant serpents (including Vāsuki and others).

(11.16) I see, on all sides, You of endless form, Who have innumerable arms, innumerable stomachs, innumerable mouths, and innumerable eyes.

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O Lord of the Cosmos! O Cosmic-formed! I do not see (anywhere) either Your end, or Your middle, or Your beginning.

किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रिणं च तेजोराशिं सर्वतो दीप्तिमन्तम् ।

पश्यामि त्वां दुर्निरीक्ष्यं समन्ता-द्दीप्तानलार्कद्युतिमप्रमेयम् ॥

11.17 ॥

त्वमक्षरं परमं वेदितव्यं त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।

त्वमव्ययः शाश्वतधर्मगोप्ता सनातनस्त्वं पुरुषो मतो मे ॥

11.18 ॥

अनादिमध्यान्तमनन्तवीर्य-मनन्तबाहुं शशिसूर्यनेत्रम् ।

पश्यामि त्वां दीप्तहुताशवक्त्रं स्वतेजसा विश्वमिदं तपन्तम् ॥

11.19 ॥

द्यावापृथिव्योरिदमन्तरं हि व्याप्तं त्वयैकेन दिशश्च सर्वाः ।

दृष्ट्वाद्भुतं रूपमुग्रं तवेदं लोकत्रयं प्रव्यथितं महात्मन् ॥

11.20 ॥

अमी हि त्वां सुरसंघा विशन्ति केचिद्धीताः प्राञ्जलयो

गृणन्ति ।

स्वस्तीत्युक्त्वा महर्षिसिद्धसंघाः स्तुवन्ति त्वां स्तुतिभिः

पुष्कलाभिः ॥ 11.21 ॥

(11.17) I see everywhere, You, Who are wearing a diadem, and holding a mace, and a discus, Whose effulgence is spread out in all directions, Who are a mountain of brilliance, unbearably hot, effulgent like Fire and the Sun, impossible to look at by the eyes, and boundless (-ly pervading).

(11.18) I think that You are the ultimate Knowable, the imperishable Brahman, the ultimate support of this Cosmos; that You are imperishable, and the protector of the permanent religion, and the eternal Spirit.

(11.19) I see that You, Who have no beginning, middle, or end, Who have innumerable arms, Whose eyes are the Sun and the Moon, Whose mouth is burning Fire, and Who possess inexhaustible strength, are giving warmth to this world by Your own shine.

(11.20) Because, the (entire) distance between the earth and the firmament, as also all the cardinal points, have been pervaded by You alone; and, seeing this Your wonderful and terrible Form, O Great Ātman! the three spheres are confused (by terror).

(11.21) See! these multitudes of gods are entering Your body; (and) some, being frightened, are praying to You with folded arms; and multitudes of great Ṛṣis and Perfect beings are praising

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You, uttering such words as 'svasti', ' svasti' !

रुद्रादित्या वसवो ये च साध्या विश्वेऽश्विनौ

मरुतश्चोष्मपाश्च ।

गन्धर्वयक्षासुरसिद्धसंघा वीक्षन्ते त्वां विस्मिताश्चैव सर्वे ॥

11.22 ॥

(22) Similarly, the Rudras, the Ādityas, and the Vasus, as also the Sādhyaṅas, the Viśvedeva-s, (both) the Aśvinīkumāras,

the Marudgaṇas, and the Uṣmapā-s (that is, the ancestors) and groups of Gaṇḍharvas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, and Siddhas, being astonished, arc everywhere, looking at you.

[The food offered to the ancestors in the performance of the death-anniversary ceremony is accepted by them only while it is hot; that is why they are called "uṣmapā-s" (Manu. 3.237); and the Manu-Smṛti enumerates seven groups of ancestors, such as, somasad, agniṣvāta, barhiṣad, somapā, haviṣmān, ājyapā, and sukālin (3. 194 – 200). Āditya-s and others are Vedic deities. See stanza 6 above. It is stated in the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad that the eight Vasus, eleven Rudras, twelve Ādityas, Indra, and Prajāpati make in all thirty-three gods; and their names and etymology have been stated in the Mahābhārata, Ādi-parva, Ch. 65 and 66 and Śānti-parva Ch. 208.]

रूपं महत्ते बहुवक्त्रनेत्रं महाबाहो बहुबाहूरुपादम् ।

बहूदरं बहुदंष्ट्राकरालं दृष्ट्वा लोकाः प्रव्यथितास्तथाहम् ॥

11.23 ॥

नभःस्पृशं दीप्तमनेकवर्णं व्यात्ताननं दीप्तविशालनेत्रम् ।

दृष्ट्वा हि त्वां प्रव्यथितान्तरात्मा धृतिं न विन्दामि शमं च  
विष्णो ॥ 11.24 ॥

दंष्ट्राकरालानि च ते मुखानि दृष्ट्वैव कालानलसन्निभानि ।

दिशो न जाने न लभे च शर्म प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥

11.25 ॥

(11.23) O Mahābāho! by seeing this Your immense, many-mouthed, many-eyed, many-armed, many-thighed, many-footed, many-stomached, and many-toothed – and consequently terrible-Form, everybody and I myself are frightened.

(11.24) Seeing You, heaven-reaching, brilliant, many-hued, open-mouthed, and with tremendous and shining eyes, my heart has become restless; and, on that account, O Viṣṇu! I have lost both courage and peace.

(11.25) And seeing these mouths of Yours, which are terrible on account -of rows of teeth, and are like the Destructional Fire, I cannot

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make out the cardinal directions, and I have become discomposd. O God of gods! O Cosmos-Pervader! be appeased!

अमी च त्वां धृतराष्ट्रस्य पुत्राः सर्वे सहैवावनिपालसंघैः ।  
भीष्मो द्रोणः सूतपुत्रस्तथासौ सहास्मदीयैरपि योधमुख्यैः ॥

11.26 ॥

वक्त्राणि ते त्वरमाणा विशन्ति दंष्ट्राकरालानि भयानकानि ।  
केचिद्विलग्ना दशनान्तरेषु संदृश्यन्ते चूर्णितैरुत्तमाङ्गैः ॥

11.27 ॥

यथा नदीनां बहवोऽम्बुवेगाः समुद्रमेवाभिमुखा द्रवन्ति ।  
तथा तवामी नरलोकवीरा विशन्ति वक्त्राण्यभिविज्वलन्ति ॥

11.28 ॥

यथा प्रदीप्तं ज्वलनं पतङ्गा विशन्ति नाशाय समृद्धवेगाः ।  
तथैव नाशाय विशन्ति लोका-स्तवापि वक्त्राणि समृद्धवेगाः ॥

11.29 ॥

लेलिह्यसे ग्रसमानः समन्ता-ल्लोकान्समग्रान्वदनैर्ज्वलद्भिः ।  
तेजोभिरापूर्य जगत्समग्रं भासस्तवोग्राः प्रतपन्ति विष्णो ॥

11.30 ॥

आख्याहि मे को भवानुग्ररूपो नमोऽस्तु ते देववर प्रसीद ।  
विज्ञातुमिच्छामि भवन्तमाद्यं न हि प्रजानामि तव प्रवृत्तिम् ॥

11.31 ॥

(11.26) See how all these sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, with multitudes of kings, this Bhīṣma, Droṇa, and also this Sūta-putra (Karna), together also with the most prominent warriors on our side,

(11.27) are rapidly entering into these many terrible mouths of Yours, with frightful rows of teeth; and the heads of some of them are seen being crushed, as a result of having come between Your teeth.

(11.28) Just as the many waves of the waters of a river rush towards the sea, so are these warriors from the world of humans entering Your several burning mouth9.

(11.29) Just as butterflies jump with great speed into the ignited fire, only to be killed, so also are all {these} people entering Your numerous mouths, with great velocity, only to be killed.

(11.30) O Viṣṇu! You are licking Your tongues, while swallowing all persons around You, through Your flame-filled mouths! and, pervading the entire universe, Your fiery effulgence is shining (in all directions).

(11.31) Tell me Who You are, Who have assumed this frightful form! O Super-excellent God of gods! I bow down to You! be appeased! I am desirous of knowing what Fundamental Spirit You are, because I do not (at all) understand this doing of Yours!

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श्रीभगवानुवाच

§§ कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो लोकान्समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः ।

ऋतेऽपि त्वां न भविष्यन्ति सर्वे येऽवस्थिताः प्रत्यनीकेषु

योधाः ॥ 11.32 ॥

तस्मात्त्वमुत्तिष्ठ यशो लभस्व जित्वा शत्रून् भुङ्क्व राज्यं

समृद्धम् ।

मयैवैते निहताः पूर्वमेव निमित्तमात्रं भव सव्यसाचिन् ॥

11.33 ॥

द्रोणं च भीष्मं च जयद्रथं च कर्णं तथान्यानपि योधवीरान् ।

मया हतांस्त्वं जहि मा व्यथिष्ठा युध्यस्व जेतासि रणे

सपत्नान् ॥ 11.34 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(11.32) I am the destroyer of all peoples; I am immensified "kāla" (that is, 'death' ~Translator.); and I have come here for destroying everyone. Even if you are not there, (that is, even if you do not do anything), all these different warriors, standing in the various armies, are all going to be no more (going to die).

(11.33) 'tasmāt' (that is, 'therefore' ~Translator.), arise! win success! and conquering your enemies enjoy opulent kingdoms! I have already killed these in advance. (Therefore) O Savyasācin (Arjuna)! do you (come forward to) become the nominal cause.

(11.34) Droṇa and Bhīṣma and Jayadratha and Kama, and also other warriors have been killed by Me (long ago); kill them! do not be afraid! fight! you are going to conquer your enemies in the fight!

[In short, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has actually shown to Arjuna, the vision of what Bhīṣma had said merely by words to Him, in the Udyoga-parva, when He had gone to the Kauravas to bring about a compromise, and Duryodhana would not listen to any talk of



compromise, namely, "kālapakvam idaṁ manye sarvam  
kṣatram janārdana" (Ma. Bhā. U. 127.32), that is, "O  
Janārdana! all these Kṣatriyas have already become ripe for  
death (kālapakva)". (See stanzas 26 to 31 above). The 33rd  
stanza enunciates the doctrine of Causality that, all wicked  
persons die as a result of their own acts; that, the one, who  
kills them, is only a nominal cause; and that, therefore, the one  
who kills is not to blame.]

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सञ्जय उवाच

॥ एतच्छ्रुत्वा वचनं केशवस्य कृताञ्जलिर्वेपमानः किरीटी ।

नमस्कृत्वा भूय एवाह कृष्णं सगद्गदं भीतभीतः प्रणम्य ॥

11.35 ॥

Sañjaya said:—

(11.35) Hearing this speech of Keśava, Arjuna, getting  
extremely frightened, having a choking sensation in his throat,  
and trembling, and folding his hands, bowed down low again,  
and said to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

अर्जुन उवाच

स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या जगत्प्रहृष्यत्यनुरज्यते च ।

रक्षांसि भीतानि दिशो द्रवन्ति सर्वे नमस्यन्ति च सिद्धसंघाः ॥

11.36 ॥

कस्माच्च ते न नमेरन्महात्मन् गरीयसे ब्रह्मणोऽप्यादिकर्त्रे ।

अनन्त देवेश जगन्निवास त्वमक्षरं सदसत्तत्परं यत् ॥

11.37 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(11.36) O Hṛṣīkeśa! the (whole) world is engaddened by singing (Your qualities), and is happy (in that); demons becoming frightened of You, run away in the (ten) cardinal directions, and concerts of Perfect beings are bowing down before you. (All) This is only proper.

(11.37) O Noble Soul! You are the origin even of Brahmadeva, are even superior to him; why will they not worship You? Ananta! O God of gods! O Pervader of the Cosmos! You are the sat (that is, 'immutable' ~Translator.) and asat (that is, 'mutable' ~Translator.); You are also the 'akṣara' (that is, immutable ~Translator.), Which is beyond both.

[ It will appear from Gītā 7.24; 8.20; or 15.16 that the words 'sat' and 'asat' in this place mean respectively perceptible and imperceptible, (vyakta and avyakta), or mutable and immutable (kṣara and akṣara); that Principle, which is beyond both sat and asat, has been described in the Gītā, as the Immutable Brahman (akṣara-brahma) in the words "I am neither sat nor asat" (Gītā 13.12). The word 'akṣara' is applied in the Gītā sometimes to Prakṛti and sometimes to the

Parabrahman. See my commentary on Gītā 9.19; 13.12; and 15.16.]

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त्वमादिदेवः पुरुषः पुराण-स्त्वमस्य विश्वस्य परं निधानम् ।  
वेत्तासि वेद्यं च परं च धाम त्वया ततं विश्वमनन्तरूप ॥

11.38 ॥

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशाङ्कः प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च ।  
नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्वः पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते ॥

11.39 ॥

(11.38) You are the Fundamental God; (You are) the primordial Spirit; You are the supreme Support of this universe; You are the Knower and the Knowable; You are the Exalted State; and You, O Endless-formed! have entirely pervaded or occupied (this) Cosmos.

(11.39) You are Vāyu, Yama, Agni, Varuṇa, Prajāpati (that is, Brahmadeva), and also the Great-grand-father! I bow down before You a thousand times I and once more again do I bow down, before You!

[ Seven mind-born sons, named Marīci and others, were born from Brahmadeva; from Marīci, was born Kaśyapa; and from Kaśyapa, all other progeny. (Ma. Bhā. Ādi. 65. 11); and therefore these Marīci and others, are known as 'Prajāpatis'

(the lords of progeny), (Śān. 340. 65): Therefore, the word 'Prajāpati' is interpreted by some as 'Kaśyapa and other Prajāpatis'. But, as the word 'Prajāpati' has been used here in the singular number, the interpretation of 'Prajāpati' as 'Brahmadeva' seems more acceptable. Besides, as Brahmadeva is the father of Marīci and others, that is, the grand-father (pitāmaha) of all, the subsequent expression 'great-grand-father' (prapitāmaha) follows as a matter of course; and its propriety becomes clear.]

नमः पुरस्तादथ पृष्ठतस्ते नमोऽस्तु ते सर्वत एव सर्व ।  
अनन्तवीर्यामितविक्रमस्त्वं सर्वं समाप्नोषि ततोऽसि सर्वः ॥

11.40 ॥

(40) I prostrate myself before You; and behind You; and on all sides, O Soul of everything! do I prostrate myself to You. Your procreateness is inexhaustible. Your prowess is incomparable, and as You overcome everyone, You are 'sarva' (that is, 'all-in-all' ~Translator.).

[ The words "I prostrate myself before you, and behind you" show the all-pervasiveness of the Parameśvara. This

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praise in the form of prostrations in the Path of Devotion is consistent with the descriptions of the Brahman given in the Upaniṣads; e. g., "brahmaivedaṁ amṛtaṁ purastāt brahma

paścāt brahma dakṣiṇataś cottareṇa | adhaś cordhvaṁ ca  
prasṛtaṁ brahmaivedaṁ viśvaṁ idaṁ variṣṭhaṁ || " (Muṇ.  
2.2.11; Chāṇ. 7.25).]

सखेति मत्वा प्रसभं यदुक्तं हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखेति ।  
अजानता महिमानं तवेदं मया प्रमादात्प्रणयेन वापि ॥ 11.41 ॥  
यच्चावहासार्थमसत्कृतोऽसि विहारशय्यासनभोजनेषु ।  
एकोऽथवाप्यच्युत तत्समक्षं तत्क्षामये त्वामहमप्रमेयम् ॥  
11.42 ॥

पितासि लोकस्य चराचरस्य त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुर्गरीयान् ।  
न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकः कुतोऽन्यो  
लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिमप्रभाव ॥ 11.43 ॥  
तस्मात्प्रणम्य प्रणिधाय कायं प्रसादये त्वामहमीशमीड्यम् ।  
पितेव पुत्रस्य सखेव सख्युः प्रियः प्रियायार्हसि देव सोढुम् ॥  
11.44 ॥

(11.41) Whatever I may have said disrespectfully to You, by mistake or by familiarity, considering you as my friend, not-recognising this Your greatness, in addressing you as 'O Kṛṣṇa!' 'O Yadava!' or 'O Friend!',

(11.42) and what-ever insult I may have offered to You in joke, when alone with You, or in the presence of others, while eating or sporting, or while sleeping or sitting, O Acyuta, for that forgive me, such is my prayer to You, O Immeasurable!

(11.43) You, being the father of this moveable and immoveable world, are worshipping, and the Preceptor of preceptors. In the three spheres, there is none, who is Your equal; then, O One of immeasurable prowess ! how can there be any one greater?

(11.44) Therefore, to You, Who are praiseworthy, and powerful, I pray: " Be appeased", bending my body and bowing down to You. As a father (forgives the faults) of his son, or a friend (forgives the faults) of his friend, in the same way O God I the 'priyaḥ' (that is, Yourself) should forgive 'priyāya' (that is, to me or on account of me, who am priya or beloved of You), (all my) faults.

[ Some persons interpret the words "priyaḥ priyāyārhasi" as "as the lover, in the case of a woman, beloved by him".

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But according to me that interpretation is not correct; because, the words 'priyāyārhasi' cannot grammatically be broken up into priyāyāḥ + arhasi or priyāyai + arhasi; and the word 'iva', which is indicative of a comparison, has appeared only twice in this stanza. Therefore, it is more proper to consider 'priyaḥ priyāyārhasi' as the subject-matter of comparison (upameya) instead of looking upon it as a third comparison. It would have been much better if there had been a word in the possessive case, such as, 'priyasya' (of the 'priya')

in the subject-matter of comparison (upameya), like the two comparisomal (upamānātmaka) words 'of the son' (putrasya), 'of the friend' (sakhyuḥ), which are in the possessive case. But we must here follow the rule "sthitasya gatiś cintanīyā". Imagining an ungrammatical feminine possessive case word like 'priyāyāḥ', because the masculine-gender-sixth-cased word 'priyasya' is not to be found in the text, and imagining the word 'iva' as implied, because that description does not apply to Arjuna, and inventing a third comparison as, "priyaḥ priyāyāḥ", that is, 'as the lover in the case of a woman beloved by him' – which moreover is amorous, and totally out of place – is, according to me, not proper. Besides, if all the three words 'putrasya', 'sakhyuḥ' and 'priyāyāḥ' go into the class of the standards of comparison (upamāna), then there remains no word in the possessive case in the subject-matter of comparison (upameya); and we have again to take 'me' or 'mama' (that is, 'to me') as implied; and if, with all "this trouble, one brings about a similarity of inflections or case-terminations between the subject-matter of comparison and the standard of comparison, a new mistake of difference of gender between the two again arises. On the other hand, if one breaks up the sentence, plainly and grammatically, as priyāya + arhasi, the only objection which remains, is that, instead of having the possessive case 'priyasya', we have the dative case 'priyāya' in the subject-matter of comparison; and that too is not a very serious fault. Because, in this place the dative case conveys the same meaning as the possessive case,

and such use is to be seen in other places also. This stanza has been

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interpreted in the Paramārthaprapā commentary in the same way as I have done.]

अदृष्टपूर्वं हृषितोऽस्मि दृष्ट्वा भयेन च प्रव्यथितं मनो मे ।  
तदेव मे दर्शय देव रूपं प्रसीद देवेश जगन्निवास ॥ 11.45 ॥  
किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्त-मिच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव ।  
तेनैव रूपेण चतुर्भुजेन सहस्रबाहो भव विश्वमूर्ते ॥ 11.46 ॥

(11.45) Having seen that which no one has ever seen, I am glad; and my mind is strained by fear, O Pervader of the Cosmos I O God of gods! be appeased! and O God! show me Your previous form.

(11.46) I desire to see You wearing the 'kirīṭa' (that is, diadem ~Translator.) and the mace, with a discus in Your hand, as before; and therefore, O Cosmic-Formed, thousand-armed Lord, appear again in that Your four-armed form.

श्रीभगवानुवाच

§§ मया प्रसन्नेन तवार्जुनिदं रूपं परं दर्शितमात्मयोगात् ।  
तेजोमयं विश्वमनन्तमाद्यं यन्मे त्वदन्येन न दृष्टपूर्वम् ॥  
11.47 ॥



न वेदयज्ञाध्ययनैर्न दानैर्न च क्रियाभिर्न तपोभिरुग्रैः ।  
एवंरूपः शक्य अहं नृलोके द्रष्टुं त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीर ॥

11.48 ॥

मा ते व्यथा मा च विमूढभावो दृष्ट्वा रूपं  
घोरमीदृङ्ममेदम् ।  
व्यपेतभीः प्रीतमनाः पुनस्त्वं तदेव मे रूपमिदं प्रपश्य ॥  
11.49 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(11.47) O Arjuna! having become pleased (with you),  
exercising my power of Yoga, I have shown you this brilliant,  
beginning-less, endless, primeval, and super-excellent Cosmic  
Form, which no one else before you has seen.

(11.48) O highest among the Kuru warriors! no other than you  
can have a chance of seeing, whether by the Vedas, or by  
Yajñas, or by silent meditation, or by charity, or by ritual, or by  
severe austerity, this such My-Form, in this human world.

(11.49) Do not allow your mind to suffer pain by seeing this My  
terrible form! and do not also become confused by fear. Giving  
up fear, and with a pleased frame of mind, see again that same  
form of Mine.

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सञ्जय उवाच

इत्यर्जुनं वासुदेवस्तथोक्त्वा स्वकं रूपं दर्शयामास भूयः ।  
आश्वासयामास च भीतमेनं भूत्वा पुनः सौम्यवपुर्महात्मा ॥

11.50 ॥

Sañjaya said:—

(11.50) Speaking thus, Vasudeva again showed: to Arjuna His (former) form; and assuming again His-peaceful form, that Noble Soul gave encouragement to the frightened Arjuna.

[ The metre of these 36 stanzas, is the same as that of stanzas 5 to 8, 20, 22, 29, and 70 of Chapter II, stanzas 9,10,11 and 28 of Chapter VIII, stanzas 20 and 21 of Chapter IX, and stanzas 2 to 5 and 15 of Chapter XV, namely, of eleven letters in each quarter (caraṇa). But, as they are not governed by one and the same rule about the feet (gaṇa), these stanzas cannot be recited in the; same way as can stanzas in the indra-vajrā, upendra-vajrā, upajāti, dodhaka, śālinī and other metres used in the poetical 1 compositions of Kālidāsa and others. Needless to say, this metrical arrangement is archaic (ārṣa), that is, on the basis of the 'triṣṭupa' metre used in the Veda-Saṁhitās. This fortifies the proposition that the Gītā must be very ancient indeed (see p.726 of the Appendix to the Gītā-Rahasya.)

अर्जुन उवाच

दृष्ट्वेदं मानुषं रूपं तव सौम्यं जनार्दन ।

इदानीमस्मि संवृत्तः सचेताः प्रकृतिं गतः ॥ 11.51 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(11.51) O Janārdana! seeing this Your mild and human-bodied form, my mind is again in its proper place, and I have become conscious, as before.

श्रीभगवानुवाच

§§ सुदुर्दर्शमिदं रूपं दृष्टवानसि यन्मम ।

देवा अप्यस्य रूपस्य नित्यं दर्शनकाङ्क्षिणः ॥ 11.52 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(11.52) This My form, which you have seen, is very difficult to see. Even the gods always

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desire to see this form.

नाहं वेदैर्न तपसा न दानेन न चेज्यया ।

शक्य एवंविधो द्रष्टुं दृष्टवानसि मां यथा ॥ 11.53 ॥

भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवंविधोऽर्जुन ।

ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप ॥ 11.54 ॥

(11.53) It is not possible for anyone to see Me, as you have seen Me, whether by Vedas, or by austerity, or by charity, or by Yajñas.

(11.54) O Arjuna! only by exclusive devotion, is it possible to thus acquire knowledge of Me, and O Parantapa! to enter Me essentially.

[ The proposition that by Devotion one first acquires the Knowledge of the Parameśvara, and ultimately the devotee is merged into the Parameśvara has appeared before in Gītā 4.9 and later on in 18.55; and the reader is referred to the explanation given by me in Chapter XIII of the Gītā-Rahasya at pp.595 to 599. Now, the Blessed Lord briefly explains to Arjuna the summary of the entire Gītā—]

§§ मत्कर्मकृन्मत्परमो मद्वक्तः सङ्गवर्जितः ।

निर्वैरः सर्वभूतेषु यः स मामेति पाण्डव ॥ 11.55 ॥

(11.55) Who performs Action with the conviction that all. Actions are Mine (that is, of the Parameśvara), who is devoted to Me; who is attachment-less , non-inimical towards all beings, such My devotee, O Pāṇḍava, comes and reaches Me!

[The above stanza means that (i) the devotee of the Blessed Lord should perform all worldly Actions with the idea of dedicating them to the Parameśvara, that is to say, with a prideless frame of mind, thinking that, the entire activity in the world is of the Parameśvara, who is the true Doer, and the One, "Who truly causes to be done; but that, He gets these actions done through us, by making us the nominal causes; and that, (ii) thereby, all acts, which are done, do not obstruct tranquility or Release (see stanza 33); and it is stated even in the Śāṅkarabhāṣya that this stanza contains the summary of the entire philosophy of the Gītā. This clearly shows that the Path of Devotion prescribed in the

Gītā does not advise one to sit down doing nothing, and only saying 'Hari,' 'Hari' (taking the name of God); but directs one to do all acts desirelessly, and enthusiastically, side by side with possessing an ardent devotion. In order to make it clear that the word 'nirvaira' (non-inimical), does not here mean 'niṣkriya' (actionless) as interpreted by those who follow the Path of Renunciation, the adjective 'matkarmakṛt' (that is, doing all acts with the idea of dedicating them to the Parameśvara, and believing that the acts are of the Parameśvara, and not one's own) has been added; but as this matter has been extensively considered by me in Chap. XII of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.545 to 556), I am not going to discuss it further here.

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगो नामैकादशोऽध्यायः ॥

11 ॥

Thus ends the eleventh chapter entitled VISVARUPA-DARSANA Yoga in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga, included in the Science of the Brahman (that is, on the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

--:O:--

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# CHAPTER XII – BHAKTI-YOGA.

द्वादशोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER XII.

[ In Chap. VII, the Blessed Lord has started an explanation of the Empirical and Spiritual Knowledge required for acquiring Perfection in Karma-Yoga; and in Chap. VIII, He has explained the form of the Immutable, Unshowable, and Imperceptible Brahman; and thereafter, He has started an explanation of the visible royal road in the shape of the Path of Devotion; and after having finished the Description of Manifestations (vibhūti-varṇana) and the showing of the Cosmic Form (viśvarūpa-darśana), incidental to that path, in Chapters X and XI, He has, at the end of Chapter XI, advised Arjuna to perform all Actions with Devotion and unattachedly, as the ultimate summary of everything. Now Arjuna says: "After proving to me in Chapters VII and VIII that the Imperceptible form of the Parameśvara is the most superior one to be worshipped, from the point of view of the Mutable and the Immutable, for success in Karma-Yoga, You have prescribed to me the worship of the Imperceptible or the Immutable (7.19 and 24; 8.21); and You have advised me to fight (8.7) with a mind steeped in Yoga (yukta-citta); and afterwards in Chap. IX, after explaining to me

the visible path of the worship of the Perceptible, You have-asked me to perform all Actions with the idea of dedicating them to the. Parameśvara (9. 27 and 34; and 11.55). Now which of these two paths is the better one?" In this question the 'worship of the Perceptible' means 'Devotion'. But, what is meant here is not Devotion to different objects of worship; and it is explained that the true worship of the Perceptible is the Devotion, according to which, there is only one. All-Pervasive Parameśvara in all symbols or objects of worship, whatever symbol or Object is taken for worship; and that is 'the kind of Devotion advocated in this chapter.]

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अर्जुन उवाच

§§ एवं सततयुक्ता ये भक्तास्त्वां पर्युपासते ।

ये चाप्यक्षरमव्यक्तं तेषां के योगवित्तमाः ॥ 12.1 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(12.1) Who are the better knowers of (Karma-) Yoga, those devotees who, always becoming yukta (that is, Yoga-yukta) worship You, or those, who worship the akṣara (that is, Brahman)?

श्रीभगवानुवाच

§§ मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ।



श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः ॥ 12.2 ॥

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।

सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम् ॥ 12.3 ॥

संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।

ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥ 12.4 ॥

क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।

अव्यक्ता हि गतिर्दुःखं देहवद्विरवाप्यते ॥ 12.5 ॥

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।

अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥ 12.6 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(12.2) In My opinion, those who, keeping their minds on Me, and becoming yukta-citta (that is, mind-united ~Translator.) worship Me, with the highest Devotion, are the best 'yukta' (that is, Yogins).

(12.3) But those, who worship the akṣara (that is, the Brahman) Which is 'anirdeśya' (that is, Which cannot be actually shown), Imperceptible, All-pervading, Unimaginable, 'kūṭastha' (that is, Which is at the root of everything), Unmoving and Non-transient,

(12.4) after having controlled their senses and become equable-minded towards everything, such (persons too), who are engrossed in the welfare of all beings, also come and reach Me.

(12.5) Nevertheless, as their mind is attached to the Imperceptible, their task is more arduous because (to men, who dwell in a perceptible body) the path of worship of the Imperceptible becomes successful with difficulty.

(6) But those, who worship Me, making a

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samnyāsa (that is, dedication) of all Actions to Me, becoming devoted to Me, and meditating on Me with a Yoga (that is, union ~Translator.) with no one else,

तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।

भवामि नचिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥ 12.7 ॥

मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय ।

निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥ 12.8 ॥

(12.7) such persons who have become 'maccitta' (that is, mind-united with Me ~Translator.), O Pārtha! I redeem, from this death-bound ocean of worldly life without delay.

(12.8) (Therefore) keep your mind fixed on Me, concentrate your Reason on Me, so that, .afterwards you will undoubtedly dwell in Me.

[The superiority of the Path of Devotion has been expounded in this paragraph. After first stating the proposition, in stanza 2, that the devotees of the Blessed Lord are the best Yogins,

the conjunction "tu", which shows an alternative aspect, has been used in stanza 3; and in that and in the 4th stanza, it is stated that those, who worship the Imperceptible also come and are merged in Him. It is stated in stanza 5, that though this may be true, the path of those who worship the Imperceptible, is more difficult; and after explaining in the 6th and 7th stanzas the comparative facility of the worship of the Perceptible, the advice has been given to Arjuna ultimately in the 8th stanza to act accordingly. In short, the advice given at the end of Chap. XI (11.55) has further been emphasised here in reply to the question of Arjuna. As the facility of the Path of Devotion has been considered by me in full detail in Chapter XIII of the Gītā-Rahasya, I shall not repeat the same subject-matter here. I shall only say here that though the worship of the Imperceptible may be difficult, yet, it is productive of Release; that, even in the Path of Devotion, one cannot give up Actions, but has necessarily to perform them, dedicating them to the Parameśvara; and that, the followers of the Path of Devotion should bear this in mind. And that is why the words "making a saṁnyāsa (that is, dedication) of all Actions to

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Me" have been used in the sixth stanza. These words clearly mean that in the Path of Devotion, Actions have not to be literally given up, but one has to dedicate them, that is, their fruit, to the Parameśvara. And, this also makes it perfectly

clear that the Devotee, whom the Blessed Lord has referred to at the end of this Chapter as being dear to Him, is to be understood as one, who follows this path, that is, the Path of the Desireless Karma-Yoga, and not one, who makes a literal saṁnyāsa or Abandonment of Action. To proceed: having in this way shown the facility and the superiority of the Path of Devotion, the Blessed Lord now explains the means or devices to be used for acquiring such Devotion to the Parameśvara, and ultimately gives the differential characteristics of these various means –]

§§ अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम् ।

अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छासुं धनंजय ॥ 12.9 ॥

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव ।

मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धिमवाप्स्यसि ॥ 12.10 ॥

अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रितः ।

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् ॥ 12.11 ॥

(12.9) Now, if it is not possible for you to concentrate? your mind well on Me (in this way), then, O Dhanañjaya!. keep hope of attaining to Me, with the help of austere practice, by trying again and again.

(12.10) If it is not possible for you even to perform practice, then perform (the) Actions-(such as, Spiritual Knowledge, Meditation, Hymn-singings Worship etc., which have been mentioned in the Śāstras)-for Me, (that is, for attaining to Me);

by performing (these) Actions for Me, you will also have success.

(12.11) But, if it is impossible for You even to perform this ritual, then, take shelter in 'madyoga' (that is, in the Yoga of dedicating everything to Me, .namely, the Karma-Yoga);-and becoming a 'yatātmā' (that is, gradually controlling your mind), thereafter (ultimately) abandon the Fruit of all Actions;

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श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासाज्ज्ञानाद्ध्यानं विशिष्यते ।

ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागस्त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् ॥ 12.12 ॥

(12.12) because, Knowledge is superior to Practice; Meditation is superior to Knowledge; and Abandoning the Fruit of Action (is superior) to Meditation; and by (this) Abandonment (of the Fruit of Action), there is (acquired) tranquility immediately afterwards.

[ These stanzas are very important from the point of view of Karma-Toga; and in them, after mentioning austere practice, Knowledge, prayer, and other ritual as means for successfully acquiring the Devotional Karma-Yoga, a differential consideration of the worth of the various means has been made; and in stanza 12, the superiority of the Abandonment of the Bruit of Action, that is to say, of the Desireless Karma-Yoga has been established. It is not that this superiority of the

Desireless Karma-Yoga has been mentioned only in this place; but, the same doctrine has been clearly repeated previously in the third (3.8), fifth (5.2) and sixth (6.46) chapters; and Arjuna has been advised in various places to practise Karma-Yoga in the shape of Abandonment of the Fruit of Action (See Gītā-Rahasya pp.425 to 427). But those, who support a doctrine different from the Gītā-religion, find this theory inconsistent with themselves; and they have, therefore, attempted to twist the meaning of the above stanzas, and especially of the words in the 12th stanza. Those commentators, who support the pure Path of Knowledge, that is to say, the Sāṃkhya commentators, do not like that Abandonment of the Fruit of Action should be given a higher place than Spiritual Knowledge. They have, therefore, said that either the word 'jñāna' must be interpreted as -meaning 'mere bookish knowledge', or, that this praise of Abandonment of the Fruit of Action is merely an 'arthavāda' (See Vol. I p.31 ~Translator.), that is, 'fallow praise'. In the same way, those who support the Path of Pātañjala-Yoga, do not like that Abandonment, of the Fruit of Action should be given a higher place than continued austere practice (abhyāsa). And those,

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who support solely the Path of Devotion, that is, those, who say that no Karma or Action other than Devotion should be performed, cannot tolerate Abandonment of the Fruit of

Action being considered superior to Meditation, that is, Devotion. The practice of Karma-Yoga, which includes Devotion, which (path) is advocated by the Gītā, and which is different from the Pātañjala-Yoga, the Jñāna-Yoga, and the Path of Devotion, is at present practically non-existent; and therefore, there is no more any commentator available supporting that doctrine. Therefore, in the now extant commentaries on the Gītā, the praise of Abandonment of the Fruit of Action has been stated to be mere "fallow praise". But, in my opinion, that is wrong. If one accedes that the Gītā advocates the Desireless Karma-Yoga, no difficulty remains about the meaning of this stanza. When once it is admitted that one cannot give up Action, and that Desireless Action must be performed, the Path of Knowledge (jñāna-mārga), which advocates the 'literal' Abandonment of Action, the Pātañjala-Yoga, which advocates only the acrobatics of the organs, and the Path of Devotion, which gives the go-bye to all Actions, all naturally become inferior to Karma-Yoga. When the Desireless Karma-Yoga has thus been proved to be superior, the only question which remains is: what are the means for acquiring the Equability which is necessary in that path. These means are three in number, namely, continued practice (abhyāsa), Spiritual Knowledge (jñāna) and Meditation (dhyāna). Out of -these, if someone cannot perform continued practice, he should adopt either of the two other means, namely jñāna. and dhyāna (Knowledge, and Meditation). The Gītā says that these means are easy of acquiring in the order in

which they have been mentioned. But, if the man cannot do even this, then stanza 12 says that he should begin the practice of Karma-Yoga at once. Now, here a question arises, namely, how can a man, who cannot either perform continued practice or acquire Spiritual Know-ledge or Meditation, carry on the Karma-Yoga? Therefore, some commentators have considered calling Karma-Yoga the easiest path as meaningless. But, if, one considers

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the matter a little, it will be seen that there is no sense in this objection. Stanza 12 does not preach that the Abandonment of the Fruit of Action should be carried out 'at a stroke'. But, one has first to adopt the Karma-Yoga preached by the Blessed Lord; and, 'tataḥ', that is, 'thereafter', that practice has to be gradually made successful. And when this interpretation is accepted, no inconsistency remains. It has been stated in the previous chapters that not only a little practice (Gī. 2.40) of the Fruit of Action [1] (this is a mistake for 'Karma-Yoga' ~Translator.), but even the desire to perform it (See Gī. 6.44 and my commentary on it), drags a man towards ultimate perfection, as if he had been put into a grinding-mill.

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[1] The word used here in all editions of the author's text is 'karma-phala'. (that is, Fruit of Action); but evidently 'Karma-Yoga' or 'karma-phala-tyāga' and not 'karma-phala' is meant. ~Translator.



Therefore, taking shelter in the Karma-Yoga, that is, getting into one's mind the desire to follow that path, is the first means or step towards acquiring success in that path; and who will say that this means is not easier than continued practice, or Spiritual Knowledge, or Meditation? And the same is the import of stanza 12. Not only in the Bhagavadgītā, but even in the Sūryagītā, it is stated that:—

jñānād upāstir utkr̥ṣṭā karmotkr̥ṣṭam upāsanāt ।

iti yo veda vedāntaiḥ sa eva puruṣottamaḥ ॥ (Sūrya-Gī.  
4.77)

that is, "'upāsanā' i.e., Meditation or Devotion is better than Spiritual Knowledge, and Karma, that is, necessarily Desireless Action, is better than 'upāsanā'; one who realises this principle of Vedānta should be looked upon as the best man (puruṣottama) ". In short, it is the firm doctrine of the Bhagavadgītā that the Yoga in the form of Abandonment of the Fruit of Action, that is to say, the Desireless Karma-Yoga, which includes both Spiritual Knowledge and Devotion, is the most superior path of all; and the argument in stanza 12 is not only consistent with that opinion, but is in support of it. If persons belonging to a particular school of thought do not find this conclusion palatable or acceptable, they should give it up; but, they

should not indulge in a useless stretching of meanings. To proceed: the Blessed Lord, having thus proved Abandonment of the Fruit of Action to be superior, now proceeds to describe the equable and peaceable frame of mind, which is obtained by one who practises it (and not by one, who 'literally' gives up Action); and He ultimately says that a devotee of this kind is exceedingly dear to Him—]

§§ अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च ।

निर्ममो निरहंकारः समदुःखसुखः क्षमी ॥ 12.13 ॥

संतुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः ।

मय्यर्पितमनोबुद्धिर्यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ 12.14 ॥

यस्मान्नोद्विजते लोको लोकान्नोद्विजते च यः ।

हर्षामर्षभयोद्वेगैर्मुक्तो यः स च मे प्रियः ॥ 12.15 ॥

अनपेक्षः शुचिर्दक्ष उदासीनो गतव्यथः ।

सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः ॥ 12.16 ॥

यो न हृष्यति न द्वेष्टि न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।

शुभाशुभपरित्यागी भक्तिमान्यः स मे प्रियः ॥ 12.17 ॥

(12.13) One, who hates no one; who behaves in a friendly way towards all created beings; similarly, who is kind, and from whom possessiveness and Individuation have departed; to whom pain and happiness are the same; and who is forgiving,

(12.14) always contented, controlled, determined, and who has dedicated his Mind and his Reason to Me, such a (Karma-) Yogin devotee of Mine, is beloved of Me.

(12.15) One, of (or with) whom others are not tired (or disgusted), and who is not tired of others; similarly, who is untouched by joy, anger, fear, and discomfiture, is beloved of Me.

(12.16) One, who is unexpected, pure, industrious (that is, who performs any Action, giving up idleness), indifferent (about the Fruit of Action); whom no emotion can upset; and who has given up all commencements (that is, activity for desirable fruit), such My devotee is very dear to Me.

(12.17) One, who experiences no joy (about anything), does not hate (anything ~Translator.), does not regret, and does not even entertain any desire; who has

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abandoned the good or bad (Fruit of Action), such a devoted man is dear to Me.

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः ।

शीतोष्णसुखदुःखेषु समः सङ्गविवर्जितः ॥ 12.18 ॥

तुल्यनिन्दास्तुतिर्मौनी सन्तुष्टो येन केनचित् ।

अनिकेतः स्थिरमतिर्भक्तिमान्मे प्रियो नरः ॥ 12.19 ॥

(12.18) One, to whom enemies and friends, also honour and dishonour, heat and cold, pain and happiness, are the same; and who is not attached (to anything),

(12.19) to whom praise and disparagement are both the same, who speaks little, and is contented with whatever he can get, whose mind is steady, and who is 'aniketa' (that is, who has no abode in the form of a Desire for the Fruit of Action), such a devoted person is dear to Me.

[The word 'aniketa' is also very often used in describing ascetics, who give up the state of a householder, renounce the world, and roam about begging in forests (Manu. 6. 25); and its root meaning is 'one who has no abode'. Therefore, commentators, who belong to the School of Renunciation say that, the words 'nirmama', 'sarvārambha-parityāgī' and 'aniketa' used in this chapter, and other such words as 'tyaktasarvaparigrahaḥ', (4.21), or 'viviktasevī' (18.52), prove that the doctrine preached by the Gītā is, 'giving up home, and spending the rest of one's life desirelessly in a forest', which is, indeed, the highest ideal of the Path of Renunciation; and in support of this they point to many stanzas from the chapters on Renunciation in Smṛti texts. But, although these renunciatory interpretations of these words from the Gītā may be important from the point of view of the Path of Renunciation, yet, they are not correct. Because, as has been stated by me several times before, becoming 'niragni' (i.e., not performing Fire-ritual), or 'niṣkriya' (i.e., Actionless), does not amount to true Renunciation according to the Gītā; and the

firm doctrine of the Gītā is, that one must renounce only the Desire for Fruit, and never Action (See Gī. 5.2 and 6.1, 2). Therefore, the word 'aniketa' cannot be interpreted as meaning 'giving up home'; and, it must be given a meaning, which is

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consistent with the Karma-Yoga of the Gītā. In Gī. 4.20, the adjective 'nirāśraya' has been applied to the man, who does not entertain the hope for the Fruit of Action; and in Gī. 6.1, the words "anāśritaḥ karmaphalam" have been used in the same sense. The words 'āśraya' and 'niketa' are synonymous. Therefore, 'aniketa' should not be interpreted as meaning 'one, who gives up his home and family', but as 'one, whose mind is not engrossed with his home and family'.. Similarly, the word 'sarvārambha-parityāgī' in stanza 16 is not to be interpreted as meaning 'one, who gives up all Action or activity', but as meaning 'one, who gives up desireful commencements of Actions', consistently with the stanza: "He, whose samārambhā-s (that is, Actions) are devoid of Desire for Fruit, his actions are reduced to ashes by Knowledge" (Gī. 4.19), as is apparent from Gī. 18.3 and 18.48 and 49. In short, all that the Gītā says is that, one, whose Mind is engrossed with household affairs, or with his wife and children, or with the other affairs of the world, experiences pain on that account later on; and that therefore, one should not allow

one's Mind to be engrossed in these things; and the words 'aniketa' and 'sarvārambha-parityāgī', etc., have been used in the Gītā in the descriptions of the Steady-in-Reason (Sthitaprajña) for describing the renounced state of his Reason. It is true that these very words: ,have been used in the Smṛti texts in the descriptions given there of Yatins, that is, of ascetics who abandon Action; but, on that account it cannot be said that the Gītā supports Renunciation in the shape of the Abandonment of Action; because, there is, side by side, another definite proposition of the Gītā, that even the Jñānin, whose mind is saturated with this Renunciation, should, with this renunciatory frame of mind, give up the Fruit of Action, and perform all Actions, which befall him according to the Śāstras; and it would, not be correct to assert that the Gītā supports the Path of Renunciation of Action, relying on words like 'aniketa' etc., suggesting Renunciation, which one comes across in some places in the Gītā, without taking into account the posterior and anterior contexts.]

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§§ ये तु धर्म्यामृतमिदं यथोक्तं पर्युपासते ।

श्रद्धधाना मत्परमा भक्तास्तेऽतीव मे प्रियाः ॥ 12.20 ॥

(12.20) Those devotees of mine, who follow this nectar-like doctrine mentioned above, becoming engrossed in Me, are extremely beloved of Me.

[ The Blessed Lord has in this stanza given a description of that devotee of His, who is most beloved of Him, that is, of the excellent devotee of the Blessed Lord, who is a Karma-Yogin, consistently with His previous statement that the Devotee, who is also a Jñānin, is the most excellent of all. (Gī. 6.47; 7.18). But, in Gītā 9.29, the Blessed Lord has Himself said that: "all are the same to Me; such a one is not dear, and such a one is not hateful". Apparently, this would seem to be a contradiction-in-terms. But, when one remembers that the one statement has been made with reference to the worship of the Perceptible, or relates to the Path of Devotion, whereas the other statement is from the point of view of Metaphysics or from the point of view "of the Doctrine of Causality, this seeming, inconsistency disappears. The reader is referred to the exposition of this matter made at the end (pp.598 to 601) of Chapter XIII of the Gītā-Rahasya.]

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे भक्तियोगो नाम द्वादशोऽध्यायः ॥ 12 ॥

Thus ends the twelfth Chapter entitled BHAKTI-YOGA in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman (that is, on the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

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# CHAPTER XIII – KṢETRA- KṢETRAJÑA-VIBHĀGA YOGA.

त्रयोदशोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER XIII.

[ It has been proved in the last chapter that though it is true that Release can be achieved by meditating on the Unshowable (anirdeśya) and Imperceptible (avyakta) Parameśvara, yet the same Release can be obtained in an easier way by devoting oneself to the visible and perceptible form of the Parameśvara with religious faith, and by performing all Actions with the intention of dedicating them to Him. But, the explanation about Spiritual and Empirical Knowledge, which was started in Chapter VII is not finished with that. In order to acquire complete Knowledge of the Parameśvara, it is necessary to consider the Body and the Ātman of man, (that is, the 'kṣetra' and the 'Kṣetraja') at the same time as considering the mutable and immutable external universe. Similarly, although one may, in a general way, know that all perceptible objects are created from Gross Matter, yet the subject-matter of Spiritual and Empirical Knowledge is not exhausted unless one has explained by what quality of Nature this extensive development takes place and what the order of that development is. Therefore, the subject-matter of the Body

and the Ātman has first been considered in Chap. XIII; and after describing the division of the three constituents in the next four chapters, the whole subject-matter has been summed up in Chapter XVIII. In short, the third 'ṣaḍādhyāyī' (group of six chapters) is not independent; and the description of Spiritual and Empirical Knowledge, requisite for successfully acquiring the Karma-Yoga, which was started in Chap. VII has been completed in this group of six chapters. (See Gītā-Rahasya Ch. XIV pp.457 to 459). In every edition of the Gītā, the following stanza is to be found in the beginning of Chapter XIII, namely,:-

Arjuna uvāca:-

prakṛtiṁ puruṣaṁ caiva kṣetraṁ kṣetrajñam eva ca ।  
etad veditum icchāmi jñānaṁ jñeyaṁ ca keśava ॥

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which means:- "Arjuna said:- I wish to know what prakṛti, puruṣa, kṣetra, kṣetrajña, jñāna and jñeya are. Therefore, tell me that". But, it is quite clear that someone, who has not understood how the Consideration of the Body and the Ātman has found a place in the Gītā, has subsequently interpolated this stanza into the Gītā. Commentators look upon this stanza as an interpolation; and if that is not done, the number of stanzas in the Gītā also exceeds seven hundred. Therefore, I

too have looked upon this stanza as an interpolation and started this chapter as in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते ।

एतद्यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विदः ॥ 13.1 ॥

क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानं यत्तज्ज्ञानं मतं मम ॥ 13.2 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(13.1) O Kaunteya! this Body itself is called the 'kṣetra'. He, who understands this (Body), is called the 'kṣetrajña' by the 'tadvida-s' (that is, by those persons who understand this science).

(13.2) O Bhārata I know that in all Bodies, I am the 'kṣetrajña' (that is, the Self or the Ātman ~Translator.). The Knowledge of the 'kṣetra' and the 'kṣetrajña' has been considered the Knowledge of Me (the Parameśvara).

[ In the first stanza, the meanings of the two words kṣetra and kṣetrajña have been defined; and in the second stanza, the kṣetrajña has been defined by saying that "the kṣetrajña means Myself, i.e., the Parameśvara"; or that, "that which is in the Body, the same thing is in the Cosmos". The word 'cāpi'= "also" in the second stanza indicates that He is not only the Ātman (kṣetrajña), but also the Body (kṣetra); because, it has been stated already in Chapters VII and VIII that the kṣetra, or

the Body, originates from the five primordial elements, which in turn

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have come out of Prakṛti (Matter)'; and that, Prakṛti is only a minor manifestation of the Parameśvara (7. 4; 8. 4; 9.8). As the kṣetra or the Body has thus been made up of the five primordial elements, it is included in what is known as the Mutable (kṣara), in the Consideration of the Mutable (kṣara) and the Immutable (akṣara); and the kṣetrajña is nothing but the Parameśvara. Therefore, the Consideration of the Body and the Ātman becomes a part of the Knowledge of the Parameśvara in the same way as the Consideration of the Mutable and the Immutable (See Gī. Ra. pp.193 to 201); and that is why it is stated at the end of stanza 2, that "the Knowledge of the Body and the Ātman is the Knowledge of Myself or of the Parameśvara". Those, who do not accept the Non-dualistic Vedānta, have got to stretch the meaning of the words "I am also the kṣetrajña"; and they have to maintain that these words do not prove the absence of difference between the "kṣetrajña" and "I, the Parameśvara"; and others take the word 'my' (mama) as relating to 'matam', that is, 'has been understood', instead of referring it to "Jñāna"; and interpret the sentence as meaning, "Hook upon the knowledge of these as Jñāna"; but these interpretations are not straightforward. It has been clearly stated in the beginning of

Chapter VIII that " the Ātman (adhideva) [1], which resides in the Body, is Myself"; or that whatever is in the Body, the same thing is in the Cosmos"; and it has also been stated in Chapter VII (7.5) that "the Jīva (the Personal Self) is my inferior Prakṛti"; and there are statements to the same effect further on in this Chapter in stanzas 22 and 31. The Blessed Lord now explains where and by whom the Consideration of the Body and the Ātman has been made –]

§§ तत्क्षेत्रं यच्च यादृक्च यद्विकारि यतश्च यत् ।

स च यो यत्प्रभावश्च तत्समासेन मे शृणु ॥ 13.3 ॥

(3) What the kṣetra is, what its nature is, what its modifications are, and withal what comes out of what; as-also Who the kṣetrajña is and what His prowess is, I shall

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explain all this in brief, to which listen.

ऋषिभिर्बहुधा गीतं छन्दोभिर्विविधैः पृथक् ।

ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैश्चैव हेतुमद्विर्विनिश्चितैः ॥ 13.4 ॥

(13.4) In many ways, in different metres, by (many) Ṛṣis individually, as also by the words in the Brahma-Sūtras, which have been made perfectly definite by showing the motive (in

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[1] The Author possibly means 'adhideha'; see p.1031 supra. ~Translator.

the shape of cause and effect) has this (that is, this subject-matter) been sung.

[The word 'Brahma-Sūtra' in this stanza refers to the present Vedānta-Sūtras, as has been explained by me in detail in the Appendices to the Gītā-Rahasya (See Gī. Ra. pp.748 to 758). The Upaniṣads are not one treatise written by one Ṛṣi; and the various metaphysical ideas, which inspired the minds of various Ṛṣis at different times or at different places, have been described in the various Upaniṣads, without considering their mutual inter-relation. Therefore, the Upaniṣads seem miscellaneous, and in several places mutually contradictory. The words 'vividha' and 'pṛthak' which appear in the first part of this stanza have been used with reference to this miscellaneous nature of the Upaniṣads. As these Upaniṣads are miscellaneous and mutually contradictory, Bādarāyaṇācārya wrote the Brahma-Sūtras or the Vedānta-Sūtras, in order to make them mutually consistent; and considering all the subjects in the Upaniṣads, he has conclusively proved in these Sūtras, by showing the why and wherefore, how it is possible to evolve one single doctrine from the various Upaniṣads. It is dear that a study of the Vedānta-Sūtras is always essential in order to understand the esoteric import of the Upaniṣads; and therefore, both have been referred to in this stanza. The kṣetra has been considered in the first sixteen Sūtras of the 3rd division (pāda) of the 2nd Chapter (adhyāya) of the Brahma-Sūtras; and there-after the 'kṣetrajña' has been considered upto the end of the division. As this consideration has been

made in the Brahma-Sūtras, they are also called "the Śāraka-Sūtras", that is to say, the canons (sūtras), which deal with the 'śāraka' (kṣetra). To proceed: the Blessed Lord has thus

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explained where and by whom the subject-matter of the Body and the Ātman has been considered; He now explains what the Body (kṣetra) is—]

§§ महाभूतान्यहंकारो बुद्धिरव्यक्तमेव च ।

इन्द्रियाणि दशैकं च पञ्च चेन्द्रियगोचराः ॥ 13.5 ॥

इच्छा द्वेषः सुखं दुःखं संघातश्चेतना धृतिः ।

एतत्क्षेत्रं समासेन सविकारमुदाहृतम् ॥ 13.6 ॥

(13.5) The (five gross) primordial elements (such as, the earth etc.), Individuality (ahamkāra), Reason (mahān), and the Imperceptible (Prakṛti), as also the ten (subtle) senses and one (Mind); and the five (subtle) objects (such as, sound, touch, colour, taste and smell) of the five senses,

(13.6) Desire, Hate, Happiness, Unhappiness, 'saṁghāta' (that is, the group ~Translator.), 'cetanā', (that is, the visible activity of the Vital airs etc.), and 'dhṛti' (that is, courage); this collection (of 31 elements) is known as the organised (savikāra) Body.

[ This is a definition of the kṣetra and of its vikāra-s. In Stanza 5 have been mentioned 24 out of the 25 elements of the Sāṃkhyas except the Spirit (puruṣa). As the Mind is included in these 24 elements, it was not necessary to enumerate separately the qualities of the Mind, such as, Desire, Hate etc. These are the qualities of the Ātman according to the Kaṇādas; and if this idea is accepted, a doubt arises as to whether or not these qualities are included in the kṣetra. Therefore, in order to make the definition of the word kṣetra perfectly unambiguous, the pairs of Opposites such as, Desire, Hate etc., have been clearly included here in the definition of the kṣetra itself; and these pairs include the other pairs such as, fear and fearlessness, etc., by implication. In order to show that the saṁghāta or the 'collection', of all these, is not an agent, independent of the Body, it has been included in the definition of the Body itself. The word 'cetanā' is sometimes understood as Consciousness (caitanya); but in the present context, the word 'cetanā' means only the 'activity of the Vital airs etc., to be seen in the Gross Body'; or 'the activity

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resulting from being alive'; and it has been stated in stanza 2 above, that the cicchakti (power of consciousness) or caitanya, which is responsible for the existence of this activity in gross bodies, is in the form of the kṣetrajña, which is different from the kṣetra. The word 'dhṛti' has been defined later on in the



Gītā itself (18.33), to which the reader is referred. The word 'samāśena' in the sixth stanza means "group made up of all these". A further explanation has been given at the end of Chapter VI of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.193 to 195), to which the reader is referred. After first stating that the kṣetrajñā is the Parameśvara, the Blessed Lord has given an explanation of what the kṣetra is. Now an explanation is given of what Jñāna is, by stating what influence this Jñāna (Knowledge) has on the temperament of a man; and later on the nature of the Knowable (jñeya) has been explained. These two subjects seem to be different from each other; but practically speaking, these are the two divisions of the Consideration of the Body and the Ātman; because, it has been stated already in the beginning that the kṣetrajñā is the Parameśvara. Therefore, the Knowledge of the kṣetrajñā is the Knowledge of the Parameśvara; and the nature of this Knowledge has been described in the following stanzas. It is not that some totally different subject-matter has been pushed in here in the middle.]

§§ अमानित्वमदम्भित्वमहिंसा क्षान्तिरार्जवम् ।

आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः ॥ 13.7 ॥

इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनहंकार एव च ।

जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधिदुःखदोषानुदर्शनम् ॥ 13.8 ॥

(J) Not having vanity, not having hypocrisy; harmless-ness, forgiveness, straightforwardness, service of preceptors, purity, steadiness, concentration of the Mind;

(13.8) indifference towards the objects of the senses; also, absence of Individuation; and the feeling that life, death, old age, illness, and unhappiness are evils (which pursue one);

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असक्तिरनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु ।

नित्यं च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥ 13.9 ॥

मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।

विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिर्जनसंसदि ॥ 13.10 ॥

अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।

एतज्ज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदतोऽन्यथा ॥ 13.11 ॥

(13.9) non-attachment (towards Action); not being engrossed with one's wife and children, and one's home etc., having an equable frame of Mind, whether something good or something evil happens;

(13.10) having an unswerving mono-focussed Devotion to Me; and remaining in a 'vivikta' (that is, a chosen, or a solitary place); not liking the meeting-place of ordinary people;

(13.11) beginning to realise that Metaphysical Knowledge is permanent; and meditation on propositions of philosophy, all

this has been called 'jñāna' (Knowledge), and all rest is 'ajñāna' (Ignorance).

[ According to Sāṃkhya philosophy, the Knowledge of the Body and the Ātman is the knowledge of the distinction between Spirit and Matter; and that has been explained later on in this chapter (13.19 – 23; 14.19); similarly an exhaustive definition of the nature of Knowledge has been given in Chapter XVIII (18.20) in the words "avibhaktaṁ vibhakteṣu". But, according to the science of Release, Knowledge of the kṣetra and kṣetrajña does not only mean, understanding by the Mind that a particular thing is of a particular kind. It is a proposition of Metaphysics that, Knowledge must create an effect on the mental temperament in the shape of Equability of Reason; and that otherwise, that Knowledge is incomplete or immature. Therefore, 'Jñāna' has been described in the above stanzas by saying' that a man may be said to have 'Jñāna' when absence of vanity, hypocrisy, non-violence, non-attachment, equability etc. and the other twenty qualities mentioned in the above five stanzas are seen in him, instead of defining Jñāna as the understanding by the mind of particular things (see Gī. Ra. Chap. IX pp.341 to 344). The description of one feature of Jñāna contained in the words, "remaining in a solitary

place and not liking a common meeting place", appearing in stanza 10, has been taken hold of by some commentators for proving that the Path of Renunciation is supported by the Gītā; but I have already stated before that such an interpretation is not correct, and that it is not even proper to put such an interpretation on these words (See note on Gī. 12.19, and Gī. Ra. p.391). The only thing which has been considered in this place is what Jñāna is; and there is no dispute about the fact that Jñāna means 'absence of Attachment for one's wife and children, for one's home, and for the common meeting-place of people'. Whether after the acquisition of this Jñāna, a man should remain in the world or among his wife and children with this Desireless Mind, and perform worldly Action for the benefit of the world, is the next question; and it is not proper to decide that question by merely considering the definition of the word 'Jñāna'. Because, the Blessed Lord has stated in many places in the Gītā itself that a Jñānin must continue to perform all Actions with an unattached frame of mind, 'without becoming engrossed in the Actions, and for universal welfare; and He has, in support of that proposition, mentioned the illustrations of the life of Janaka and of Himself (Gī. 3.19 – 25; 4. 14). The life of Śrī Samarthā Rāmadāsa clearly shows how it is possible for a man to take part in the affairs in the world as a duty, without having a desire to live in the town (See Dāsabodha 19.6.29 and 19.9.11). So far a description has been given of the nature of Jñāna. The Blessed Lord now gives a description of the Knowable –]

§§ ज्ञेयं यत्तत्प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वामृतमश्नुते ।

अनादि मत्परं ब्रह्म न सत्तन्नासदुच्यते ॥ 13.12 ॥

सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत्सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम् ।

सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति ॥ 13.13 ॥

(13.12) (Now) I will tell (you) That, by knowing -which, one attains to amṛta (that is, Release). (It is) eternal, (It is) the Brahman, Which is beyond (everything); It is not called 'sat'; not is It called 'asat';

(13.13) It has arms

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and feet on all sides; eyes, heads, and mouths on all sides; and It pervades everything in this world;

सर्वेन्द्रियगुणाभासं सर्वेन्द्रियविवर्जितम् ।

असत्तं सर्वभृच्चैव निर्गुणं गुणभोक्तृ च ॥ 13.14 ॥

बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च ।

सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत् ॥ 13.15 ॥

अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।

भूतभर्तृ च तज्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च ॥ 13.16 ॥

ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते ।

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम् ॥ 13.17 ॥

(13.14) It creates an impression that It has the qualities of all the senses; and It has no senses at all; though It is asakta (that is, untouched by anything), It, at the same time, supports everything; and being qualityless, It yet enjoys all the qualities,

(13.15) (It) is in all things and outside all things; (It) is immoveable and at the same time moveable; being subtle, It is incapable of being known; and being far away, It is yet near.

(13.16) (Though) It is (essentially) 'avibhakta' (that is, unbroken), It is, so to say, divided among all beings (by diversity); and It must be looked upon as That Which supports, swallows up, and also creates (all) beings;

(13.17) It is called the Brilliance of all brilliance, and Something beyond darkness; It is 'Jñāna'; It is the 'Jñeya' (that is, that which is to be known) and 'Jñāna-gamya' (that is, capable of being understood only by Jñāna); and It is, installed in the heart of everybody.

[The above description of the Inconceivable and Imperishable Parabrahman, which is also known as the kṣetrajāña or the Paramātmān (Gī. 13.22), has been made, on the authority of the Upaniṣads, in the same way as that of the Imperishable Brahman in Chapter VIII (Gī. 8.9 – 11). The -whole of stanza 13 (Śve. 3.16) and the subsequent, demi-stanza: "It creates an impression that it possesses the senses, and it has no senses at all" have been taken literally, from the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad (Śve. 3.17); and

the words "being far away, It is yet near" are to be found in the Īśāvāsyā (5), and the Muṇḍaka (13.1.7) Upaniṣads. Similarly, the words "the Brilliance of all brilliance" are from the Bṛhadāraṇyaka (Br. 4.4.16); and "something beyond darkness" are from the Śvetāśvatara (3.8). The description "It is not called sat, nor is It called asat" is according to the well-known Sūtra on the Brahman, namely, "nāsadāsīt no sadāsīt" from the Ṛg-Veda. The meaning of the two words 'sat' and 'asat' has been exhaustively considered in Chapter IX of the Gītā-Rahasya (Ch. IX pp.336 to 338), as also in the commentary on Gītā 9.19, to which the reader is referred. In Gītā 9.19, it was stated that He is the 'sat' as also the 'asat'; and it is now stated that the true Brahman is neither 'sat' nor 'asat', which would seem to be a contradiction-in-terms: but this contradiction is not real; because, the proposition that, "though the vyakta (kṣara) and avyakta (akṣara) universe are both forms of the Parameśvara, yet, the true Parameśvara. Element is beyond both these, that is, totally incognisable", has been clearly enunciated before in the Gītā in the stanza "bhūtabhṛṇ na ca bhūtaśtho" (Gī. 9.5), and also again where the description of the Puruṣottama has been given (Gī. 15.16, 17). As the questions, 'what is called the nirguṇa Brahman', 'how that nirguṇa Brahman is outside the world, while being in the world', and 'how, though It might appear diverse or divided (vibhakta), It is fundamentally undivided (avibhakta), or only

One' have already been considered in Chapter IX of the Gītā-Rahasya (p.285 et seq.), I shall not repeat the same subject-matter here. The words " It is so to say divided among all beings " in stanza 16, are a translation of the words "vibhaktam iva"; and this word 'iva' has been used several times in the Upaniṣads in this sense, that is to say, in the sense that the diversity in the world is illusory and that unity is the only truth. For example, see "dvaitam iva bhavati", "ya iha nāneva paśyati" etc., (Bṛ. 2.4.14; 4.4.19; 4.3.7). It is, therefore, quite clear that the Gītā supports the Non-Dualistic proposition that Māyā, embodied in various Names and Forms is illusory, and that the Brahman which

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indivisibly permeates that Illusion is alone Beal. In Gītā 18.20, later on, it is again stated that, "avibhaktam vibhakteṣu", that is to say, 'seeing Unity in Diversity', is a sign of sāttvika Knowledge. That this sāttvika Knowledge is the Brahman, and other similar topics have been discussed by me in the chapter of the Gītā-Rahasya, which deals with the Absolute Self (See Gī. Ba. Ch. IX, pp.293 to 295 and Ch. VI. pp.178 to 180).]

इति क्षेत्रं तथा ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं चोक्तं समासतः ।

मद्वक्त एतद्विज्ञाय मद्रावायोपपद्यते ॥ 13.18 ॥



(13.18) I have thus briefly explained to you what the 'kṣetra', 'jñāna' and the 'jñeya' are. Knowing this, My devotee is merged into My form.

[The kṣetra, jñāna, and the jñeya have so far been considered with the help of the Science of the Absolute Self or of the Vedānta-Śāstra. As the jñeya out of these is the kṣetrajña or the Parabrahman, and jñāna is the Knowledge of the Body (kṣetra) and the Ātman (kṣetrajña), mentioned in stanza 2, this becomes a short description of all Knowledge of the Parameśvara; and since the Knowledge of the kṣetra and the kṣetrajña is the Knowledge of the Parameśvara, it follows, as a matter of course, that the fruit of it must be Release; and that proposition has been laid down in stanza 18. The Consideration of the Body and the Atman according to the Vedānta-Śāstra ends here. But, since the organised (savikāra) Body, composed of the primordial elements, has sprung out of Prakṛti, and since what the Sāṃkhyas call 'puruṣa' (Spirit) is the Ātman according to Vedānta, the Consideration of the Body and the Ātman becomes the Consideration of Prakṛti and Puruṣa according to the Sāṃkhyas. The Gītā does not look upon Prakṛti and Puruṣa as two independent elements, as is done by the Sāṃkhyas; and it has been stated in Chapter VII of the Gītā that they are respectively the inferior and superior forms of one and the same Parameśvara (7.4,5). But when once one accepts this Non-Dualism or Monism, instead of the Dualism of the Sāṃkhyas, then what the Sāṃkhyas say about

the mutual relation between Prakṛti and Puruṣa is not unacceptable

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to the Gītā. Nay, the Consideration of Prakṛti and Puruṣa is nothing but the Consideration of the Body and the Ātman in another form. (See Gī. Ra. Ch. VII). There-fore, the Blessed Lord, having expounded the Knowledge of the Body and the Ātman on the authority of the Upaniṣads, now again explains the same Knowledge in the terminology of Sāṃkhya philosophy, but without accepting the Dualism of the Sāṃkhyas, in the shape of a dis-crimination between the Prakṛti and Puruṣa –]

§§ प्रकृतिं पुरुषं चैव विद्ध्यनादी उभावपि ।

विकारांश्च गुणांश्चैव विद्धि प्रकृतिसंभवान् ॥ 13.19 ॥

(13.19) Know that both Prakṛti and Puruṣa are eternal. Know that the evolutes (vikāra) and the constituents (guṇa), all spring out of Prakṛti.

[ According to Sāṃkhya philosophy, Prakṛti and Puruṣa are not only eternal but also independent of each other and self-created. According to Vedānta philosophy, Prakṛti originates from the Parameśvara and is, therefore, neither self-created nor independent (Gī. 4.5, 6). But, as it cannot be said when Prakṛti originated from the Parameśvara, and as the Puruṣa

(Jīva) is a part of the Parameśvara (Gī. 15.7), Vedāntists admit that both are eternal. A further elucidation of this subject-matter has been made in Chap. VII of the Gītā-Rahasya, specially at pp.219 to 226 and in Chapter X at pp.362 to 366, to which the reader is referred.]

कार्यकरणकर्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते ।

पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते ॥ 13.20 ॥

(13.20) Prakṛti is said to be the cause for the activity of the kārya (that is, the Body) and of the kāraṇa (that is, the senses); and (without being a Doer) the Puruṣa (Kṣetrajña) is said to be the cause for experiencing pain or pleasure.

[In this stanza, the reading 'kāryakāraṇa' is found in some texts instead of the reading 'kāryakaraṇa'; with that reading the stanza means, that the 23 elements of Sāṃkhya philosophy, namely, Mahat and the others. spring One out of the other, the one being the cause for

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the one which follows, and that the entire perceptible universe comes into existence out of Prakṛti. Such an interpretation would not be improper. But in the Consideration of the Body and the Ātman, a Consideration of the origin of the Body, is out of place. How the world has sprung out of Prakṛti has been

explained before in Chapters VII and IX. Therefore, the reading 'kāryakaraṇa' seems more appropriate in this place. The Śāṃkarabhāṣya adopts the reading 'kāryakaraṇa', ]

पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान्गुणान् ।

कारणं गुणसङ्गोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु ॥ 13.21 ॥

(13.21) Because, when Prakṛti is superintended over by Puruṣa, It enjoys the constituents born of Prakṛti; and this union with the constituents (of Prakṛti) becomes the cause for the Puruṣa to take birth in a good or bad species.

[ This description of the difference and the mutual relation between Prakṛti and Puruṣa is from Sāṃkhya philosophy (see Gī. Ra. pp.219 to 221). The Blessed Lord now explains that the 'Puruṣa' of Sāṃkhya philosophy is called the 'Paramātmān' by Vedāntists; He thus links the Sāṃkhya with the Vedānta philosophy; and when that is done, the Consideration of the Prakṛti and Puruṣa is harmonised with the Consideration of the Body and the Ātman.]

§§ उपद्रष्टानुमन्ता च भर्ता भोक्ता महेश्वरः ।

परमात्मेति चाप्युक्तो देहेऽस्मिन्पुरुषः परः ॥ 13.22 ॥

य एवं वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिं च गुणैः सह ।

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥ 13.23 ॥

(13.22) This 'upadraṣṭā', (that is, One, Who sits near and sees the constituents of Prakṛti), Who gives the consent, Who is the

' bhartā ' (that is, One, Who adds to the constituents of Prakṛti), and the Enjoyer, is known as the parapuruṣa (that is, the Highest Puruṣa ~Translator.), the maheśvara (that is, the Highest Īśvara ~Translator.) and the Paramātmān, Who resides in the Body.

(13.23) Who thus knows the Puruṣa (as quality less) and (that) Prakṛti (alone

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is) full of qualities, however he may be acting, does not get re-birth.

[When it has been proved in stanza 22, that the Puruṣa is the Paramātmān within the Body, the inactivity and apathy, which are the qualities of the Puruṣa according to Sāṃkhya philosophy now become the inactivity of the Ātman; and a harmony is established between the arguments of the Sāṃkhyas and Vedānta. Some writers on Vedānta imagine that Sāṃkhya philosophy is inimical to Vedānta philosophy; and many Vedāntists look upon the Sāṃkhya arguments as entirely negligible. But instead of doing so, the Gītā has expounded the question of the Body and the Ātman, once from the point of view of Vedānta, and again from the point of view of Sāṃkhya philosophy (without, however, abandoning the Non-Dualism of Vedānta). This shows the equability of the Gītā-science. Nay,

this may be said to be an important difference between the expositions in the Upaniṣads and in the Gītā respectively (See Gī. Ra. App. pp.756 to 757). This clearly shows that though the Gītā does not accept the Dualism of Sāṃkhya philosophy, it does not fail to accept as much as is acceptable out of Sāṃkhya philosophy. It has been stated in stanza 2, that the Knowledge of the Body and the Ātman is nothing but the Knowledge of the Parameśvara. The Blessed Lord now incidentally explains in short the various means of acquiring Release, by acquiring this Knowledge of the Body (piṇḍa) and of the Parameśvara within the Body –]

§§ ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना ।

अन्ये सांख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे ॥ 13.24 ॥

अन्ये त्वेवमजानन्तः श्रुत्वान्येभ्य उपासते ।

तेऽपि चातितरन्त्येव मृत्युं श्रुतिपरायणाः ॥ 13.25 ॥

(13.24) Some persons of their own accord see the Ātman within themselves by means of meditation; some by the Sāṃkhya-Yoga and some by the Karma-Yoga;

(13.25) but those; who do not thus acquire the Knowledge (by themselves), many such worship (the Parameśvara, with religious faith) by hearing the advice of others. These persons, who act,

accepting as correct what they have heard, also overcome death and go beyond.

[ These two stanzas mention the various paths of Self-Realisation, namely, (i) Meditation, according to the Pātañjala-Yoga; (ii) Abandonment of Action after the acquisition of Knowledge, according to the Sāṃkhya; (iii) (a) performing all Actions desirelessly and with the intention of dedicating them to the Parameśvara, and (6) placing confidence with faith, in the statements of trust-worthy persons and becoming devoted to the Parameśvara, (Gī. 4.39), according to Karma-Yoga. Whichever path one follows, one ultimately gains the Knowledge of the Parameśvara and attains Release. Therefore, the proposition laid down in the earlier chapters, that the Path of Karma-Yoga is the best, from the point of view of Universal "Welfare, is not thereby affected in the least. Having in this way stated the various means of Self-Realisation, the entire subject has been summarised in the next stanzas in a general way; and even in doing that, a unanimity has been established between the Kāpila Sāṃkhya philosophy and Vedānta.]

§§ यावत्संजायते किञ्चित्सत्त्वं स्थावरजङ्गमम् ।

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगात्तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ ॥ 13.26 ॥

समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम् ।

विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्तं यः पश्यति स पश्यति ॥ 13.27 ॥

समं पश्यन्ति सर्वत्र समवस्थितमीश्वरम् ।

न हिनस्त्यात्मनात्मानं ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥ 13.28 ॥

(13.26) O Bharataśreṣṭha! remember that whatever move-able or imoveable thing is created, comes into existence as a result of the union between the Body and the Ātman.

(13.27) He, who has seen the Parameśvara, Who is equally in all created things, and Who is not destroyed, even when all beings are destroyed, he may be said to have understood (the real principle).

(13.28) Realising that the Parameśvara equally pervades everywhere, that man, who, by such Knowledge

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escapes self-destruction (that is, who, of his own accord, takes to the path of virtue) attains thereby an excellent state.

[ The description of the Parameśvara given in stanza 27 has appeared before in Gī. 8. 20; and this subject has been explained in Chapter IX of the Gītā-Rahasya (See Gī. Ra. pp.299 and 353). In the same way, the statement made before, that the Ātman is everybody's friend as also his enemy (Gī. 6. 5 – 7) has been repeated again in stanza 28. Having given a description of the feeling of equability towards all beings in stanzas 26, 27, and 28, the Blessed Lord now explains what happens as a result of this Know-ledge –]

§§ प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः ।



यः पश्यति तथात्मानमकर्तारं स पश्यति ॥ 13.29 ॥

यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्थमनुपश्यति ।

तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदा ॥ 13.30 ॥

(13.29) He, who has understood that (all) Actions are in every way got performed by means of Prakṛti, and that the Ātman is Itself inactive (that is, One, who does nothing), may be said to have understood (the true principle).

(30) When, the diversity ("that is, manifoldness) in various beings is seen as a unity; and when (all this) extension is seen (to have taken place) from this (unity), the Brahman is attained to.

[The Blessed Lord now explains how the Ātman is quality less, untouched, and inactive –]

§§ अनादित्वान्निर्गुणत्वात्परमात्मायमव्ययः ।

शरीरस्थोऽपि कौन्तेय न करोति न लिप्यते ॥ 13.31 ॥

यथा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते ।

सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथात्मा नोपलिप्यते ॥ 13.32 ॥

(13.31) Being eternal and qualityless, this inexhaustible Paramātmān, Kaunteya! does not perform anything, though remaining within the Body; and to Him, the contact (that is, bondage) of no Action attaches itself.

(32) As ether, pervading everything, is not affected (by anything), being subtle, so the Ātman, pervading the Body everywhere, is not

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affected (by anything).

यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः ।

क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत ॥ 13.33 ॥

§§ क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोरेवमन्तरं ज्ञानचक्षुषा ।

भूतप्रकृतिमोक्षं च ये विदुर्यान्ति ते परम् ॥ 13.34 ॥

(13.33) As the Sun alone illuminates this entire Cosmos, so also, O Bhārata! the Ātman illuminates the entire Body.

(13.34) Those, who thus, by spiritual eyes (that is, by eyes in the shape of Knowledge), understand the difference between the Body and the Ātman, and the Release of the (fundamental) Prakṛti of all beings, reach the Parabrahman.

[ This is the summary of the entire chapter. I have interpreted the word "bhūtaprakṛtimokṣa" according to the Sāṃkhya doctrine. According to this doctrine, getting Release or not, are not states of the Ātman; because, It is always a Non-doer and unattached; but as It arrogates Activity to Itself, as a result of Its union with Prakṛti, the Prakṛti with which It is united, is liberated when "this ignorance is destroyed; that is to say, the Prakṛti is Released; and then it gives up its dance in front of the Puruṣa. Therefore, the Sāṃkhyas maintain that the two states of being bound and being released are essentially states of Prakṛti (See Sāṃkhya-Kārikā 62, and Gī. Ra. Ch. VII p.223). ]

think that the words "the Release of the Prakṛti" have been used in this stanza with reference to this Sāṃkhya doctrine. But some interpret this expression as meaning "bhūtebhyaḥ prakṛteś ca mokṣaḥ", that is, "the Ātman is Released from the five primordial elements and Prakṛti", that is to say, from Illusory Action. To proceed: this discrimination between the Body and the Ātman is made by means of the sight of Knowledge (Gī. 13.34), whereas the king of Vidyās (rāja-vidyā) mentioned in Chapter IX is to be realised by the physical eyes (Gī. 9. 2); and the vision of the Cosmic Form is to be had, even by the highest devotee of the Blessed Lord, by divine eyes (Gī. 11.8). This distinction between the

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explanations of Jñāna and Vijñāna given in the 9th, 11th, and 13th chapters should be borne in mind.]

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञविभागयोगो नाम  
त्रयोदशोऽध्यायः ॥ 13 ॥

Thus ends the thirteenth chapter entitled KSETRA-KSETRAJNA VIBHAGA YOGA in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman (that is, on

the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

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# CHAPTER XIV – GUṆATRAYA- VIBHĀGA YOGA.

चतुर्दशोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER XIV.

[ In Chapter XIII, the doctrine of the Body and the Ātman-has been expounded, once from the point of view of Vedānta-and again from the point of view of Sāṃkhya philosophy; and it has been stated there that the entire activity is of the Prakṛti, and that the Puruṣa, that is, the kṣetrajña is apathetic. But, it has not been explained in what way this activity of Prakṛti continues going. Therefore, the Blessed Lord explains in this chapter how diverse forms of creation, and especially of the living creation, are created from one and the same Prakṛti. If one considers only the human creation, then, as this subject deals with the kṣetra, that is to say, with the Body, it can be easily included in the Consideration of the Body and the Ātman. But, as the immoveable world is also an expansion of the three-constituted Prakṛti, the exposition of the difference in the constituents of Prakṛti can also form part of the Consideration of the Mutable and the Immutable. The Blessed Lord has, therefore, given up a restricted description

as 'Consideration of the Body and the Ātman', and started this chapter saying that He would explain to Arjuna in further detail the Jñāna (Spiritual Knowledge) and Vijñāna (Empirical Knowledge) which He had commenced to explain in Chapter "VII. The reader is referred to the exhaustive explanation of this subject-matter, which has been given in Chapter VIII of the Gītā-Rahasya, This description of the diffusion or spreading-out of the three constituents of Prakṛti has also been given in the Anugītā and in Chapter XII of the Manu-Smṛti.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

§§ परं भूयः प्रवक्ष्यामि ज्ञानानां ज्ञानमुत्तमम् ।

यज्ज्ञात्वा मुनयः सर्वे परां सिद्धिमितो गताः ॥ 14.1 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(14.1) Once more am I going to tell you the best knowledge of all Knowledge, by knowing which all sages have reached the highest state from this

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world.

इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागताः ।

सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च ॥ 14.2 ॥

(14.2) Those who, taking shelter in this Knowledge, have become merged in Me, do not come to birth when the Cosmos

is created, nor do they die when the-Cosmos is destroyed; (that is to say, they become entirely free from the cycle of birth and death).

[This is an introduction. Now the Blessed Lord says in the first instance that Prakṛti is only one form of Himself; and having thereby got rid of the Sāṃkhya Dualism, He now explains – without clashing with Vedānta –how the various perceptible objects come into existence in the world as a result of the three constituents of Prakṛti.]

§§ मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्म तस्मिन्गर्भं दधाम्यहम् ।

संभवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत ॥ 14.3 ॥

सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः संभवन्ति याः ।

तासां ब्रह्म महद्योनिरहं बीजप्रदः पिता ॥ 14.4 ॥

§§ सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसंभवाः ।

निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥ 14.5 ॥

तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्वात्प्रकाशकमनामयम् ।

सुखसङ्गेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चानघ ॥ 14.6 ॥

(14.3) O Bhārata! the mahadbrahma (that is, Prakṛti) is My womb, and I lay in it the embryo of life; then all beings begin to come to life therefrom.

(14.4) All beings, which come to birth in the various species (such as beasts or birds etc.), of them, O Kaunteya! the

mahadbrahma is the place of generation, and I am the Father, Who impregnates it with the seed.

(14.5) O Mahābāho! the sattva, rajas and tamas constituents, which spring from Prakṛti, keep tied within the Body, the 'avyaya' [that is, the unmodifiable (nirvikāra) Ātman], which resides in the Body.

(14.6) Out of these, the sattva constituent, which illumines because it is pure, and which is faultless, O sinless Arjuna! keeps (beings) in bondage by the Attachment for happiness and Knowledge.

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रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम् ।

तन्निबध्नाति कौन्तेय कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनम् ॥ 14.7 ॥

तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम् ।

प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिस्तन्निबध्नाति भारत ॥ 14.8 ॥

सत्त्वं सुखे संजयति रजः कर्मणि भारत ।

ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे संजयत्युत ॥ 14.9 ॥

(14.7) The characteristic of the rajas constituent is to keep one engrossed; and know, that Desire and Attachment arise from this constituent. O Kaunteya! it keeps beings in bondage by the (Energistic) Attachment for performing Actions.



(14.8) But the tamas constituent springs from Ignorance; and know, that it confuses all beings. O Bhārata! it keeps (them) in bondage by ignorance of duty, idleness, and sleep.

(14.9) The sattva constituent creates an Attachment for happiness, and the rajas constituent, for Action; but O Bhārata! the tamas constituent throws a cloak on Knowledge, and creates an Attachment for 'pramāda' (that is, ignorance of duty or forgetfulness of duty.)

[The individual natures of the three constituents have thus been explained. But these three constituents never exist individually, independent of each other; and they are always together. For example, although it is the nature of the sattva constituent to make a man do any good action, yet, as the inclination to do the good action results from the rajas constituent, there must also be some mixture of the rajas constituent with the sāttvika temperament. That is why the sattva constituent is mentioned as the pair of the tamas constituent, and the rajas constituent as the pair of the sattva constituent in the Anugītā, which gives a pairing description of these constituents (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 36); and it is stated there, that all things in the world are created by the mutual support or mutual inter-relations of these constituents. (See Sām. Kā. 12 and Gī. Ra. pp.213 to 215). This very principle is now first enunciated, and then the characteristics of the sattva, rajas and tamas constituents are described.]

§§ रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय सत्त्वं भवति भारत ।

रजः सत्त्वं तमश्चैव तमः सत्त्वं रजस्तथा ॥ 14.10 ॥

सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन्प्रकाश उपजायते ।

ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्याद्विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत ॥ 14.11 ॥

लोभः प्रवृत्तिरारम्भः कर्मणामशमः स्पृहा ।

रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ ॥ 14.12 ॥

अप्रकाशोऽप्रवृत्तिश्च प्रमादो मोह एव च ।

तमस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन ॥ 14.13 ॥

(14.10) Defeating the rajas and tamas constituents, the sattva becomes (preponderant); (then, he is said to be sāttvika); and by defeating the sattva and tamas constituents, the rajas constituent becomes (preponderant); and by defeating the sattva and rajas constituents, the tamas becomes (preponderant).

(14.11) When in this body, in all its apertures (senses), light (that is, spotless Knowledge) comes into existence, the sattva constituent may be understood to have grown.

(14.12) O Bharataśreṣṭha! when the rajas constituent increases, avarice, inclination towards Action, and the commencement of Actions, dissatisfaction, and Desire come into existence;

(14.13) and O Kurunandana! when the tamas constituent increases, darkness, a desire not to do anything, and pramāda

(that is, forgetfulness of one's duties) and confusion, even these, come into existence.

[ The Blessed Lord has explained what differences take place in the nature of a man, while he is alive, as a result of the three constituents. HE now explains what goal is reached by these three kinds of persons –]

§§ यदा सत्त्वे प्रवृद्धे तु प्रलयं याति देहभृत् ।  
तदोत्तमविदां लोकानमलान्प्रतिपद्यते ॥ 14.14 ॥  
रजसि प्रलयं गत्वा कर्मसङ्गिषु जायते ।  
तथा प्रलीनस्तमसि मूढयोनिषु जायते ॥ 14.15 ॥

(14.14) If a being dies when there is a preponderance of the sattva constituent, it goes to the pure spheres (such as, heaven, etc.) of those, who understand the exalted principles (that is, of gods, etc.).

(14.15) If it dies when the rajas

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constituent is preponderant, it takes birth among those, who are engrossed in Action; and dying when there is preponderance of the tamas constituent, it takes birth in ignorant species, (such as, birds, beasts, etc.).

कर्मणः सुकृतस्याहुः सात्त्विकं निर्मलं फलम् ।  
रजसस्तु फलं दुःखमज्ञानं तमसः फलम् ॥ 14.16 ॥

सत्त्वात्संजायते ज्ञानं रजसो लोभ एव च ।

प्रमादमोहौ तमसो भवतोऽज्ञानमेव च ॥ 14.17 ॥

ऊर्ध्वं गच्छन्ति सत्त्वस्था मध्ये तिष्ठन्ति राजसाः ।

जघन्यगुणवृत्तिस्था अधो गच्छन्ति तामसाः ॥ 14.18 ॥

(14.16) It is said that the result of virtuous Action is sinless and sāttvika; but the result of rājasa Action is pain, and the result of tāmasa Action is ignorance.

(14.17) Whereas Knowledge arises from the sattva constituent, avarice springs from the rajas constituent, and not only forgetfulness of duty and confusion, but even Ignorance arises from the tamas constituent.

(14.18) The sāttvika beings reach superior spheres, (that is, heaven, etc.), the rājasa beings remain in the middle (that is, human spheres), and the tāmasa, who have inferior qualities and inclinations, go to lower spheres.

[ It has been stated-even in the Sāṃkhya Kārikā, that the person actuated by the sattva constituent obtains heaven, because he is religious-minded and performs good actions; and that the one actuated by the tamas constituent goes to lower spheres, because he performs unrighteous actions.

(Sāṃ. Kā. 44). Similarly, the 18th stanza appears literally in the Anugītā in the description of the three constituents (Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 39, 10; and Manu. 12.40). But, even if a man may attain heaven by sāttvika Action, yet, he does not thereby attain the highest goal of manhood, since heaven is not permanent. In

order to obtain this highest goal of manhood, or Release, the man must, according to the Sāṃkhya doctrine, not only have a completely sātत्वika nature, but also acquire the Knowledge that Prakṛti is a different thing from the Puruṣa. This is what the

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Sāṃkhyas call the "triguṇātītāvasthā", that is, 'the state of being beyond and untouched by the three constituents'; and although this state is beyond the sattva, rajas, and tamas constituents, yet, in as much as it is the highest peak of the sātत्वika state, it is ordinarily included in the sātत्वika class; and it is not looked upon as a fourth class, as has been stated by me at the end of Chapter VII at pp.227 – 8 of the Gītā-Rahasya. Yet, as the Gītā does not accept the Sāṃkhya Dualism of Prakṛti and Puruṣa, it alters the form of the above Sāṃkhya doctrine by saying that he who realises the one Ātman-formed Parameśvara or Parabrahman, Who is beyond both Prakṛti and Puruṣa, to be the Qualityless Brahman, is to be called the 'triguṇātīta' (one beyond the three constituents); and that is what is described in the next stanza –]

§§ नान्यं गुणेभ्यः कर्तारं यदा द्रष्टानुपश्यति ।

गुणेभ्यश्च परं वेत्ति मद्भावं सोऽधिगच्छति ॥ 14.19 ॥

गुणानेतानतीत्य त्रीन्देही देहसमुद्भवान् ।

जन्ममृत्युजरादुःखैर्विमुक्तोऽमृतमश्नुते ॥ 14.20 ॥

(14.19) When the 'draṣṭā' (that is, the apathetic looker-on Puruṣa) realises that there is no other active agent except the constituents (of Prakṛti), and realises (the Principle) beyond (all) the (three) constituents, then he reaches My form.

(14.20) The embodied man, transcending these three - constituents, which are the cause of the birth of the Body, and becoming free from the pain of birth, death, and old age experiences immortality (that is, Release).

[ In as much as that which is 'Māyā', according to Vedānta, is 'triguṇātmaka prakṛti' (three-constituted Prakṛti) according to Sāṃkhya philosophy, becoming 'triguṇātīta' means 'casting off Māyā or Illusion, and recognising the Parabrahman' (Gī. 2.45); and this is what is known as 'the Brāhmī state' (Gī. 2.72; 18.53). Hearing these characteristics of the 'triguṇātīta' according to the philosophy of the Absolute Self, Arjuna becomes inspired with the desire of learning more about it; and as

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he has in Chapter II asked a question about the Steady-in-Reason (sthitaprajña), (2.54), so also he now asks—]

अर्जुन उवाच

§§ कैर्लिङ्गैस्त्रीन्गुणानेतानतीतो भवति प्रभो ।

किमाचारः कथं चैतांस्त्रीन्गुणानतिवर्तते ॥ 14.21 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(14.21) O Lord! by what characteristic may a man (be said to) go beyond the three constituents? What is the behaviour of that (triguṇātīta) person? and how does he go beyond these three constituents? (tell me that).

श्रीभगवानुवाच

प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्तिं च मोहमेव च पाण्डव ।

न द्वेष्टि संप्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति ॥ 14.22 ॥

उदासीनवदासीनो गुणैर्यो न विचाल्यते ।

गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येव योऽवतिष्ठति नेङ्गते ॥ 14.23 ॥

समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टाश्मकान्ननः ।

तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुतिः ॥ 14.24 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(14.22) O Pāṇḍava! that man, who, when Enlightenment, Progression, and Ignorance (that is, respectively the products or the effects of the sattva, rajas and tamas constituents) overcome him, does not hate them; and, who does not desire to possess them, if he does not obtain them;

(14.23) who remains like an Apathetic towards the Fruit of Action; whom the (sattva, rajas, and tamas) constituents cannot unsettle; who remains steady, only realising that the

constituents are performing (their respective) functions, and does not move (that is, does not experience any emotion); (14.24) to whom pain and happiness-are the same; who has become 'svasthaḥ' (that is, steady in his own place); to whom earth, stone, and gold are just the same; to whom what is beloved and what is disliked, disparagement and praise, are just the same; who is always

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courageful;

मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः ।

सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥ 14.25 ॥

(14.25) to whom, honour and dishonour are 'tulya' (that is, alike), and a friend's party, or an enemy's side are both alike; whose (desireful) activities have come to an end, (because he has realised that it is Prakṛti, which is doing everything), such a man is known as a 'triguṇātīta' (that is, one who has transcended the three constituents ~Translator.).

[ This is the reply to the two questions: (i) what are the characteristics and (ii) the conduct of the person, who is a 'triguṇātīta' (that is, who has transcended the three constituents)? These characteristics are. the same as those of the Steady-in-Reason (sthitaprajña) described in Chapter II , and of the Devotee (bhaktimān) described in Chapter XII. Nay,



some of the adjectives (namely, "sarvārambha-parityāgī", "tulya-nindā-stuṭiḥ", "udāsinaḥ" etc.) are the same in two of the three or even in all the three places. From this it becomes clear, that whichever path, out of the four paths-mentioned in the last chapter (13.24, 25), is followed, the characteristics and the conduct of the man, who has reached Perfection (siddhi), are the same in all paths. Nevertheless, as the doctrine firmly established in the 3rd, 4th, 5th and other chapters, namely, that 'no one can escape the performance of Desireless Action', remains unaffected throughout, one must remember that all these persons, whether called 'sthitaprajña' or 'bhagavad-bhakta' or 'triguṇātīta', all belong to the Path of Karma-Yoga. The reader is referred to the explanation of the word 'sarvārambha-parityāgī' given in the commentary on Gī. 12.19. Commentators subscribing to the Path of Renunciation imagine that these descriptions of the person, who has reached the State of Perfection (siddhāvasthā) are independent of each other; and maintain that the Gītā supports their own doctrine. But, I have explained at great length in Chapters XI and XII of the Gītā -Rahasya, that such an interpretation is inconsistent with the anterior and posterior contexts, and not the correct interpretation (See

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p.450 and pp.519 – 520). To proceed: the Blessed Lord has thus answered the two questions of Arjuna. He now gives the

answer to the question, how such persons transcend the three constituents –]

§§ मां च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते ।

स गुणान्समतीत्यैतान्ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥ 14.26 ॥

(14.26) And he, who serves Me with the avyabhicāra (that is, single-aimed) Yoga of Devotion, dedicating all Actions solely to Me, goes beyond these three constituents, and becomes capable of attaining the brahmabhūtāvasthā (that is, the state of being 'brahmabhūta', or 'merged in the Brahman '

~Translator.);

[ A doubt is likely to arise about this stanza, namely, how the state of being a triguṇātīta (that is, of transcending the three constituents), which pertains to the Sāṁkhya path, can be obtained by the Bhakti-Yoga, which includes Action. So the Blessed Lord now says –]

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाहममृतस्याव्ययस्य च ।

शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च ॥ 14.27 ॥

(14.27) because, I am the ultimate seat of the immortal and inexhaustible Brahman, of the Perpetual Religion, and of the 'ekāntika' (that is, the highest) intense bliss.

[ This stanza means, that as soon as one has given up the Sāṁkhya Dualism, there remains only one Parameśvara; and the state of being a 'triguṇātīta' is reached by worshipping that one Parameśvara. Nevertheless, when once it is admitted that there is only one Parameśvara, the Gītā does not have any

dogmatic insistence about the means of attaining to Him (see GĪ. 13.24 and 25). It is true that the Gītā has stated that the Path of Devotion is the easiest path, and therefore, most acceptable to everybody. But, it has nowhere stated that the other paths ought not to be followed, That the Gītā supports only the Path of Devotion, or only the Path of Knowledge, or only the Path of Yoga are opinions, which are fathered on the Gītā by the supporters of those respective doctrines.

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The doctrine really established by the Gītā is something quite different. Whether, after a person has acquired the Knowledge of the Paramēśvara –whatever the means he may have employed for the purpose –he should or should not continue to perform the various Actions of -worldly life, for universal welfare, is the chief question in the Gītā; and the reply to that question has already been given before in clear and unmistakable terms to the effect that the Karma-Yoga is the most superior.]

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे गुणत्रयविभागयोगो नाम चतुर्दशोऽध्यायः ॥

Thus ends the fourteenth Chapter entitled GUNATRAYA-VIBHAGA YOGA in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman (that is, on the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

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# CHAPTER XV – PURUṢOTTAMA-YOGA.

पञ्चदशोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER XV.

[ In Chapter XIII, the Blessed Lord has considered the-philosophy of the Body and the Ātman together with the similar Sāṃkhya discrimination between Prakṛti and Puruṣa; and in Chapter XIV, after explaining the differences which arise between the natures of different persons, as a result of the three constituents, and how on that account different final states are obtained by the sāttvika and other persons, He has explained what is meant by being a triguṇātīta, what is the Brāhmī state according to Vedānta philosophy, and in what way that state can be reached. It is true that all this exposition has been made in Sāṃkhya terminology; yet, it has been made without accepting the Sāṃkhya Dualism; and, as being the Spiritual and Empirical Knowledge of that one Parameśvara, of whom Prakṛti and Puruṣa are both manifestations. In addition to this description of the form of the Parameśvara, the Blessed Lord has shown in Chapter VIII the differences between the adhiyajña, the adhyātma, the adhidaivata etc.; and He has also

stated, that there is only one Parameśvara, Who pervades everything, and that He is also the Ātman (kṣetrajña) within the Body (kṣetra). The Blessed Lord now explains why the expansion of the Universe created by the Parameśvara, or the Name-d and Form-ed diffusion-out of the Parameśvara, is sometimes described by comparing it to a tree or a forest; and He then describes the Puruṣottama-svarūpa, which is the most-excellent of the forms of the Parameśvara.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

॥ ऊर्ध्वमूलमधःशाखमश्वत्थं प्राहुरव्ययम् ।

छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित् ॥ 15.1 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(15.1) Having its root (one) above and branches (manifold) below, and (which is) avyaya (that is, which will never perish); of which the 'chandāṁsi' (that is, the Vedas) are the leaves, that man, who has

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understood the aśvattha-tree, which is described thus, is the (true) veda-vettā (that is, one who has understood the Vedas ~Translator.),

[ The above description is of the 'Brahma-vṛkṣa ' (the Brahmic-Tree), or of the saṁsāra-vṛkṣa (the tree of the Cosmos). The word 'saṁsāra' is understood in the Marāṭhī vernacular as

meaning 'remaining in the midst of one's wife and children, and performing one's daily duties.' But, this narrow meaning is not intended in the present context; and samsara means "the entire world, which can be seen by the eyes, or the visible Cosmos", which is known in Sāṃkhya philosophy as "the diffusion of Prakṛti", and in Vedānta philosophy as "the spreading-out of the Māyā (Illusion) of the Blessed Lord"; and the same thing has been described in the Anugītā as the "Brahma-vṛkṣa and the Brahma-vana" (brahmāraṇya), (See Ma. Bhā, Aśva. 35 and 47). The idea or the simile that the colossal visible universe has sprung from the One and Imperceptible Parameśvara, just as a sky-high tree springs from a minute seed, is to be found not only in the Vedic religion, but also in other ancient religions; and in modern European languages, it is described as the Cosmic-Tree (jagat-vṛkṣa). There is a description in the Ṛg-Veda (1.24.7) of a tree in the sphere of Varuṇa, the root of the rays of which is uppermost, the rays themselves extending downwards (nicīnāḥ); and in the Viṣṇu-Sahasranāma (thousand names of Viṣṇu), 'varuṇovṛkṣaḥ ' (the Tree of Varuṇa) is mentioned as one of the thousand names of the Parameśvara. It would seem that the 'supalāśa-vṛkṣa', sitting under which Yama and the ancestors eat and drink together (Ṛg. 10.135.1); or at the "top of which is a sweet pippala, on which two suparṇa birds live" (Ṛg. 1.164.22); or " that pippala tree, which is shaken by the āyū deities (the Marudgaṇas)", (Ṛg. 5.54.12), is the same as this tree; and the description in the Atharva-Veda, namely,

"the aśvattha tree, being the home of the gods, is in the third svarga sphere (in the Varuṇa-loka)", (Atharva. 5.4.3 and 19.39.6), would also seem to be with reference to this tree. The etymology of the word 'aśvattha' has been given in the Taittirīya

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Brāhmaṇa (3.8.2.2) as follows, namely:—"This tree is called 'aśvattha', because Agni or Yajña-Prajapati fell from the sphere of gods (deva-loka) during the pitṛyāṇa [1] and taking the form of a horse (Aśva), remained invisible in it for a year" (See Ma. Bhā. Anu. 85). And many etymologists are of opinion that this tree is called 'aśvattha', (i.e., horse-stable), because the horses of the Sun take rest under it in the Yama-loka (sphere of Yama), during the night of the pitṛyāṇa. The etymology of that word, given in Vedānta philosophy as:— 'a' means 'not'; 'śva', means 'to-morrow'; and 'ttha' means 'remaining' (aśvattha = not remaining to-morrow), has been imagined afterwards. It is true that the form of Māyā can be described as "not remaining to-morrow", since the form of Name-d and Form-ed Māyā is perishable, mutable, and changing every moment; but, it is clear from the adjective 'avyaya' (that is, "that which never suffers 'vyaya' or is imperishable"), which is used here, that that meaning is not intended. The pippala tree was originally

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[1] For meaning of pitṛyāṇa, see Vol. I pp.408-412. ~Translator.



known as the aśvattha tree; and the Brahmic immortal aśvattha tree, which has been described in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad in the following words, namely,

ūrdhvamūlo 'vākśākha ete 'svasthaḥ sanātanaḥ ।

tad eva śukraṁ tad brahma tad evāmṛtam ucyate ॥

is the same 'aśvattha' tree; and the description in the Bhagavadgītā must have been adopted from the description in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad, as will become quite clear from the similarity of the words "ūrdhvamūlam adhaḥśākham". As the Parameśvara is in heaven above and the jagad-vṛkṣa (the Cosmic-Tree), which has grown out of Him, has come down to the human sphere, that tree has been described as having its root, that is, the Parameśvara above, and having its innumerable branches in the shape of the diffused Cosmos spread downwards. But, as the descending shoots of the 'vaṭa' tree (banian or fig-tree) also grow downwards from above, we come across another idea in ancient religious works that this Cosmic-Tree must be the 'vaṭa' or

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the banian tree, and not the pippala tree. For instance, there is a description that the aśvattha (pippala) tree is the tree of the Sun, and that, "nyagrodho varuṇo vṛkṣaḥ", that is, "the 'nyagrodha' (nyag = downwards; and rodha= growing) vaṭa

tree is the tree of Varuṇa" (See Gobhilagr̥hya 4.7.24). There is a description in the Mahābhārata (Ma. Bhā. Vana. 188 – 91), that Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi saw the Parameśvara in the form of an infant on the branch of an avyaya (that is, imperishable, even at the time of general destruction), 'nyagrodha' (that is, downwards-growing) vaṭa-vṛkṣa (fig-tree) at the time of the pralaya (Cosmic destruction). Also, the illustration which has been given in the Chāndogyaopaniṣad for showing how this tremendous visible Cosmos has been created from the Imperceptible Parameśvara is also of the seed of the 'nyagrodha' (Chān. 6.12.1). The Cosmic-Tree (viśva-vṛkṣa) has also been described in the Śvetāśvataropaniṣad (Śve. 6.6); but, what that tree is has not been clearly stated there; and there is a description in the Muṇḍakopaniṣad that on this tree there are seated two birds, namely, the Sentient or Personal Self (jīvātman) and the Highest Self (paramātman); and that one of them is eating the pippala tree, that is, the fruits of the pippala tree, which is a description borrowed from the Ṛg-Veda. The third idea about the form of the Cosmic-Tree in addition to the two ideas, namely, of the pippala and the vaṭa trees, is of the 'audumbara' tree; and this tree has been ascribed to Dattatreya in the Purāṇas. In short, the three ideas of the world created by the Māyā (Illusion) of the Parameśvara being either a pippala or a vaṭa or an audumbara tree are to be come across in ancient treatises. And, on this account, the three names, in terms of a tree, namely, "nyagrodho 'dumbaro 'svasthaḥ" (See Ma. Bhā. Anu. 149. 101), have been mentioned

in the Viṣṇu-Sahasranāma; and these three trees have been considered deities and worshippingable in common usage. Besides, the Viṣṇu-Sahasranāma and the Gītā are both parts of the Mahābhārata; and if the Sahasranāma mentions the three different names, 'audumbara' 'vaṭa' (nyagrodha), and.

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'aśvattha', then the word 'aśvattha' used in the Gītā must be taken as meaning the pippala (aśvattha), and not the audumbara or the vaṭa trees: and that too is the original meaning of that word. The word 'chandāmsi' in the sentence: "of which the leaves are the chandāmsi, that is, the Vedas" is understood as being derived from the root 'chad' = to cover (see, Chān. 1.4 2); and the similarity of the Vedas with the leaves which cover the tree has thus been described; and it has been stated at the end that, as all this description is according to the Vedic tradition, one who knows all this is a 'vedavettā'. This is the description according to the Vedas. The same tree is now described in another way, that is, according to Sāṃkhya philosophy –]

अधश्चोर्ध्वं प्रसृतास्तस्य शाखा गुणप्रवृद्धा विषयप्रवालाः ।  
अधश्च मूलान्यनुसंततानि कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके ॥

15.2 ॥

(15.2) Its branches, which are fed by the (three) sattva and other constituents, and from which, shoots of objects of sense (in the shape of sound, touch, colour, taste, and smell) have sprung, have spread out downwards as also upwards; and ultimately, its root-lings, in the shape of Actions, are also grown downwards to a great distance in the human sphere.

[ According to Sāṃkhya philosophy, there are only two fundamental elements, namely, Prakṛti and Puruṣa; and I have explained in great detail at p.243 of Chap. VIII of the Gītā-Rahasya how the 23 elements, namely, mahat and others, come into existence, and how the Cosmic-Tree is formed, when the three-constituted Prakṛti (Nature) spreads out its diffusion before the Puruṣa (Spirit). But, as Prakṛti is not independent, but is only a part of the Parameśvara, according to Vedānta philosophy, the doctrine of that philosophy is, that this diffusion of the three-constituted Prakṛti cannot be looked upon as an independent tree, but should be taken merely as the branches of an 'ūrdhvamūla' (upwards-rooted) pippala tree. Consistently with this doctrine, there is now a slightly different description to the effect that the branches, fed by the three constituents, of the Vedic adhaḥ-śākha (downwards-branched) tree, described in

the first stanza, have spread out not only 'downwards' but also 'upwards': and thus the thread of the doctrine of Causality (karma-vipāka-prakriyā) has ultimately been interwoven into the texture. In the description of the Brahmic-Tree (brahma-vṛkṣa) given in the Anugītā, no attempt has been made to harmonise the Vedic and the Sāṃkhya descriptions; and the brahma-vṛkṣa described there is of only the 24 Elements of Sāṃkhya philosophy (See Ma. Bhā. Aśva. 35. 22, 23; and Gī. Ra. Ch. VIII, p.243). But that has not been done in the Gītā; and an attempt has been made in these two stanzas to harmonise the Vedic description of the Parameśvara, as a tree in the form of this visible world, with the Sāṃkhya description of the Cosmic Tree (brahmāṇḍa-vṛkṣa) or the diffusion-out of Prakṛti. In order to obtain Release, one must get rid of this development of the three-constituted upwards-rooted tree; but this tree is so tremendous, that it is impossible to find out its origin. Therefore, the Blessed Lord now shows the way how this universe-comprehending tree can be destroyed, and how the Immortal Principle at the root of it can be Realised –]

§§ न रूपमस्येह तथोपलभ्यते नान्तो न चादिर्न च  
संप्रतिष्ठा ।

अश्वत्थमेनं सुविरूढमूल-मसङ्गशस्त्रेण दृढेन छित्त्वा ॥ 15.3 ॥

ततः पदं तत्परिमार्गितव्यं यस्मिन्गता न निवर्तन्ति भूयः ।

तमेव चाद्यं पुरुषं प्रपद्ये यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी ॥ 15.4 ॥

(15.3) But, in this world, one cannot ascertain the form of it (as has been described above); nor does one find its end, or commencement or support; cutting this aśvattha (tree), of which the roots have gone incalculably deep, with a powerful sword in the shape of Non-Attachment,

(15.4) one should, thereafter, (saying) "I am now going to that primordial Puruṣa (Spirit ~Translator.) from Which (this) ancient (creative) Pravṛtti (Activity ~Translator.) arose", find out that seat, having gone where, there is no return.

[ The 'saṃsāra' (extensive development) of the universe is the Name-d and Form-ed Karma (Action), and this

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Karma is eternal; destroying this Karma means giving up the feeling of Attachment to it: it is not possible to destroy it in any other way; because, by its very nature, it is eternal and inexhaustible. All this subject-matter has been discussed in Chap. X of the Gītā-Rahasya at pp.394 to 401, to which the reader is referred. The doctrine that Karma is eternal has been expressed in the words, " one cannot ascertain the true form of it; nor does one find its end, or commencement ", in stanza 2; and it has been stated later on that Non-Attachment is the only means for destroying the Tree of Karma. Besides, a man gets results according to the conviction of his mind at the time of worshipping (Gī. 8.6). Therefore, stanza 4 describes the

conviction (bhāvanā) one should have in one's mind while this process of cutting this Karma-Tree is going on. This-interpretation has to be put on this stanza, because, in the reading adopted in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya, namely, "tam eva cādyam puruṣam prapadye", the verb "prapadye" in the first person singular present tense has been used; and some such word as 'iti ' has to be taken as implied. If one accepts the reading mentioned in the Rāmānujabhāṣya, namely,. "tam eva cādyam puruṣam prapadyed yataḥ pravṛttiḥ etc.", in order to get over this difficulty, it is possible to translate the stanza as: "one should find out the Seat, having gone where, there is no return; (and) one should go and reach That, from which this Cosmos was created". But, as the root 'prapad' is an ātmanepada root, it cannot get the vidhyarthi third person form 'prapadyet'. 'prapadyet' is a parasmaipada form, which is grammatically incorrect; and that is why this reading has not been adopted in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya; and that was the right thing to do. The word 'prapadye' has been used in some hymns in. the Chāndogyopaniṣad in this way, implying 'iti' (Sea Chān. 8.14.1). I need not point out that though the verb 'prapadye' is in the first person, it cannot be taken to refer to the speaker, namely, to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Who is giving the advice. The Blessed Lord now explains what beneficial result is to be obtained by acting in this manner –]

निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषा अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः ।  
द्वन्द्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञैर्गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत् ॥

15.5 ॥

न तद्भासयते सूर्यो न शशाङ्को न पावकः ।

यद्रत्ना न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम ॥ 15.6 ॥

(15.5) Who are free from vanity and ignorance, who have conquered the fault of being attached; who are steadily-engrossed in Metaphysical Knowledge; who are desireless, and liberated from the pairs of Opposites like pain and happiness etc., such Scientists go and reach this inexhaustible Seat.

(15.6) That is my super-excellent Seat, having gone where, there is no return. It is not illuminated, whether by the Sun, or by the Moon, or by Fire.

[ Out of these, the sixth stanza has appeared in the Śvetāśvatara (6.14), the Muṇḍaka (2.2.10), and the Kaṭha (5.15) Upaniṣads. The Sun, the Moon, and the stars all fall into the class of Name-d and Form-ed things; and, as the Parabrahman is beyond Name and Form, it is quite clear that the Sun, the Moon etc., all derive their light from the Parabrahman, and that nothing else is needed for illuminating the Parabrahman. The word "paramasthāna" (super-excellent Seat) in the above stanza means the Parabrahman; and being merged in this Brahman is the state of Release known as the 'Brahma-nirvāṇa'. The exposition of the Metaphysical Knowledge of the Parabrahman, taking the simile of a tree, is



now over. It now remains to describe the form of the Puruṣottama (puruṣottama-svarūpa); but the Blessed Lord first explains the evolution of the Jīva, and the appurtenant description of the form of the Jīva, which is suggested by His last words, "having gone where, there is no return".]

§§ समैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।

मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥ 15.7 ॥

(15.7) My primordial aṁśa (particle ~Translator.) takes the form of Jīva in the Jīva-world (in the land of Karma), and draws (to itself), the 'six' including the Mind, (that is to say, the Mind and the five (subtle) senses; this is known as

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the 'liṅga-śarīra').

शरीरं यदवाप्नोति यच्चाप्युत्क्रामतीश्वरः ।

गृहित्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गन्धानिवाशयात् ॥ 15.8 ॥

श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च ।

अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायं विषयानुपसेवते ॥ 15.9 ॥

(15.8) When (this) Īśvara (that is, Jīva) acquires a (gross) Body, and when it leaves the (gross) Body, then, just as the wind takes away the smell from the shelter (of the smell, such as, the flowers etc.), so also does this (Jīva) take away with itself the above-mentioned (Mind and five subtle senses).

(15.9) Making its abode in the ears, the eyes, the skin, the tongue, and the nose, as also in the Mind, this (Jīva) thereby enjoys the objects of sense.

[ In the first of these three stanzas has been described the Subtle or liṅga-Body; and then there is a description of how this Subtle Body (liṅga-śarīra) enters the Gross Body, how it leaves the Gross Body, and how remaining in' the Gross Body, it enjoys the objects of sense. According to Sāṃkhya philosophy, this Subtle Body is made up of the 18 elements starting from Mahān upto the five subtle tanmātra-s; and it is stated in the Vedānta-Sūtras (3. 1. 1), that the five subtle elements and prāṇa (life) are also included in it (see Ch. VIII of the Gītā-Rahasya, pp.855 to 262). Similarly, it is stated in the Maitryupaniṣad (9.10), that the Subtle Body is made up of 18 elements. Therefore, one has to conclude that the words "Mind and five organs" point to the collection of the other elements, which are in the Subtle Body. The doctrine that the Jīvātman does not come into existence over and over again each time from the Parameśvara, but that it is an 'eternal aṁśa' or particle of the Parameśvara (Gī. 2.24) has also been enunciated in the Vedānta-Sūtras by using the two words 'nitya' and 'aṁśa' (Ve. Sū. 2.3.17 and 43); and this fact fortifies the statement in Chap. XIII (13. 4), that the consideration of the Body and the Ātman has been adopted into the Gītā from the Brahma-Sūtras. (See Gī. Ra. App.pp.756 to 758). The word 'aṁśa' has to be taken as meaning "just as space

(ākāśa) is part of the receptacle (ghaṭa), which contains it "" (i.e., ghaṭākāśādivat amśa); and not as an 'amśa' (particle), which has been cut out, as has been shown in Chapter IX of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.338 – 339). When in this way, the Actions of taking birth in a Body, leaving the Body, and enjoying the objects of sense are going on –]

उत्क्रामन्तं स्थितं वापि भुञ्जानं वा गुणान्वितम् ।

विमूढा नानुपश्यन्ति पश्यन्ति ज्ञानचक्षुषः ॥ 15.10 ॥

यतन्तो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यन्त्यात्मन्यवस्थितम् ।

यतन्तोऽप्यकृतात्मानो नैनं पश्यन्त्यचेतसः ॥ 15.11 ॥

(15.10) Fools do not realise That, Which leaves the body, or remains, or enjoys (not by Itself, but) as a result of being united with the constituents. People, who see with the jñāna-cakṣu (that is, eyes of Knowledge ~Translator.) realise (It).

(15.11) Similarly, those Yogins who strive, realise this Ātman installed in themselves; but, those, whose Ātman (that is, Reason) is not evolved, such ignorant people cannot realise It even by striving.

[ After stating in the 10th and 11th stanzas, that Self-Realisation results by following the path of Karma-Yoga, by means of the "eyes of Knowledge", the description of the evolution of the Jīva (the Personal Self) has been completed. Now, some further description is given here of the all-

pervasiveness of the Ātman, by way of introduction, as had been done previously in Chapter VII (see, 7.8 – 19); and then from stanza 16 onwards, a description of the form of the Puruṣottama is given.]

§§ यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद्भासयतेऽखिलम् ।

यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम् ॥ 15.12 ॥

गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा ।

पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः ॥ 15.13 ॥

(15.12) That brilliance, which being in the Sun, illumines -the whole world; that brilliance, which is in the Moon and', in Fire, know that that brilliance is Mine,

(15.13) Similarly entering the earth, I maintain (all) created beings by My

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brilliance; and, becoming the fluid Soma (Moon), I maintain all auṣadhī (that is, all vegetable life).

[ The word 'soma' has the double meaning 'soma-valli', and also 'Moon'; and as the Moon is fluid, radiant (amśumān), and white, so also is the soma-valli, according to the Vedas; and both have been called "the Lord of Vegetables". But, having regard to the anterior and posterior contexts, the Moon is clearly meant here. After having stated in this stanza, that He

is the brilliance in the Moon, it is stated in this very stanza that He is also the property of the Moon to maintain vegetation. There are descriptions elsewhere also, that, as the Moon is fluid, it contains this quality, which causes the growth of vegetation.]

अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।

प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥ 15.14 ॥

सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि संनिविष्टो मत्तः स्मृतिर्ज्ञानमपोहनं च ।

वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम् ॥ 15.15 ॥

(15.14) Becoming the Vaiśvānara-formed Fire, I inhabit the bodies of created beings; and being united with the prāṇa and the apāna [1] breaths, I digest the four kinds of food (namely, that which is to be eaten, to be sucked, to be licked, and to be drunk).

(15.15) Similarly, I am installed in the heart of everybody; and Memory, Knowledge and their apohanam [2] (that is, destruction) are My doing; and I am also That, Which is to be known by means of all the Vedas; I am the author of Vedānta; and I am also the Knower of the Vedas.

[ The 2nd part of this stanza has appeared in the Kaivalyopaniṣad (Kai. 2.3); and the only difference of reading

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[1] For meaning of prāṇa and apāna, see p.939 supra. ~Translator.

[2] "apohanam", is also translated as "Reasoning faculty" (See. Apte, Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary, 1924, p.109. ~Translator.).

there is "vedair anekaiḥ" instead of "vedaiś ca sarvaḥ".  
Therefore, the inferences drawn by some critics,

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on the assumption that the word 'Vedānta' was not in existence at the time of the Gītā, that either this stanza must be looked upon as an interpolation, or the word 'Vedānta' must be taken as meaning something else, are wrong. The word 'Vedānta' has appeared in the Muṇḍaka (3.2.6), and in the Śvetāśvatara (6.22) Upaniṣads; and some of the hymns from the Śvetāśvatara are to be found literally in the Gītā. Now, the Blessed Lord gives a description of the characteristics of the Puruṣottama, based on the etymology of that word—]

§§ द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च ।

क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥ 15.16 ॥

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।

यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥ 15.17 ॥

यस्मात्क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः ।

अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः ॥ 15.18 ॥

(15.16) In this sphere, there are two Puruṣa-s (that is, entities~Translator.), namely, the 'kṣara' and the 'akṣara'. The 'kṣara' means all (perishable) beings, and That (Imperceptible

Principle in the form of Prakṛti), Which is 'kūṭastha' (that is, at the root (kūṭa) of all these beings) is called the 'akṣara'.

(15.17) But that super-excellent puruṣa (puruṣottama) is different (from both these). It is known as the 'Paramātmān'. That inexhaustible Īśvara pervades the three spheres and maintains (the three spheres).

(15.18) As I am beyond the 'kṣara', and am (a Puruṣa), even more excellent (uttama) than the 'akṣara', therefore, in ordinary parlance and also in Vedānta, I am known as the 'Puruṣottama' (puruṣa + uttama).

[ The words 'kṣara' (Mutable) and 'akṣara' (Immutable) used in stanza 16 are respectively synonymous with the words 'vyakta' (Perceptible) and 'avyakta' (Imperceptible)—or the perceptible universe and the imperceptible Prakṛti—used in Sāṃkhya philosophy. Out of these, the meaning of 'kṣara' as "a perceptible perishable substance made up

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of the five primordial Elements" is patent. But, as the adjective 'akṣara' has several times before been also applied to the Parabrahman (See Gī. 8.3; 8.21; 11.37 and 12.3), one must bear in mind that the word 'akṣara' used in defining the 'Puruṣottama' does not mean the 'akṣara Parabrahman' but means the 'akṣara Prakṛti' of Sāṃkhya philosophy. And in order that such a confusion should not arise, the word 'akṣara'

has been intentionally defined in stanza 16 as meaning the "kūṭastha Prakṛti" (See Gī. Ra. Chap. IX pp.275 to 280). In short, the AKSARA. BRAHMAN, which is beyond both the perceptible Cosmos and the imperceptible Prakṛti (see my commentary on Gī. 8. 20 – 22) is essentially the same as the PURUSOTTAMA, Who is beyond the 'kṣara' (visible Cosmos) and the 'akṣara' (Prakṛti). Both these are known as the PARAMATMAN; and it has been stated in Chapter XIII that this Paramātman resides in the Body in the form of the kṣetrajña (Gī. 13.31). From this it follows, that, the Original Principle arrived at by the Consideration of the Mutable and the Immutable, namely, the 'akṣara Brahman' is also the ultimate resultant arrived at by the Consideration of the Body and the Ātman: or, in other-words, that there is only one Puruṣottama both in the Body (piṇḍa) and in the Cosmos (brahmāṇḍa). It has also-been stated that the same Principle is to be found in the Adhibhūta, the Adhiyajña, etc., or in the (symbolical) ancient pippala tree. That man, who has Realised this-Unity in the Cosmos, and continues to Realise till death that "there is only one Ātman in all beings", attains, the Parameśvara, while he is practising the Karma-Yoga: such is the ultimate summary of this exposition of Spiritual and Empirical Knowledge. It is not that one cannot attain Release solely by Devotion to the Parameśvara, and without performing Actions. But, that is-not the import of the exposition of Spiritual and Empirical Knowledge in the Gītā; for it has been stated already in the beginning of Chap. VII of the



Gītā, that the exposition of Spiritual and Empirical Knowledge in the Gītā has been made solely (i) for showing that one

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should perform all worldly affairs with a Desireless Mind, which, has been purified, whether by Knowledge or by Devotion; and (ii) for showing how Release can thereby be obtained. To proceed: the Blessed Lord now explains what beneficial result is obtained by knowing this –]

§§ यो मामेवमसंमूढो जानाति पुरुषोत्तमम् ।

स सर्वविद्भजति मां सर्वभावेन भारत ॥ 15.19 ॥

इति गुह्यतमं शास्त्रमिदमुक्तं मयानघ ।

एतद्बुद्ध्वा बुद्धिमान्स्यात्कृतकृत्यश्च भारत ॥ 15.20 ॥

(15.19) Who thus Realises, without being engrossed by Ignorance, that I am the Puruṣottama, he, O Bhārata!- becomes omniscient, and worships Me in all ways.

(15.20) O sinless Bhārata! I have thus explained, this science, which, is a mystery of mysteries; by understanding. this (a man) will become 'buddhimān' (that is, buddha or a Knower) and 'kṛtakṛtya' (that is, 'one, who has done all that ought to be done,' ~Translator.)

[ The word 'buddhimān' here means 'buddha' or a Jñātā (Scient, Knower); because, the words 'buddha' and 'kṛtakṛtya'

have been used in the same sense in the Bhārata (Śān. 248. 11). The ordinary meaning of the word 'buddha' namely, 'the Buddha incarnation' has not appeared anywhere in the Mahābhārata (See Gī. Ra. App. pp.788 – 789;].

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुन संवादे पुरुषोत्तमयोगो नाम पञ्चदशोऽध्यायः ॥  
15 ॥

Thus ends the fifteenth chapter entitled PURUSOTTAM YOGA in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman (that. is, on the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

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# CHAPTER XVI – DAIVĀSURA- SAMPAT-VIBHĀGA YOGA.

षोडशोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER XVI.

[ The Puruṣottama-Yoga is the climax of the Knowledge of the Mutable and the Immutable; and really speaking, the exposition of Jñāna and Vijñāna, which was started in Chapter VII, for showing how a man can attain Release by Realising the Parameśvara, while he is following the Path of Karma-Yoga, should have been finished here, and the summary started. But in Chapter IX (9.12), the Blessed Lord has merely briefly stated that the ungodly person does not realise His imperceptible and excellent form; and He, therefore, now commences this chapter for describing the character of such an ungodly person; and after explaining in the next chapter why such differences arise between men and men, the entire Gītā has been summarised in Chapter XVIII.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

§§ अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।

दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥ 16.1 ॥

अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम् ।

दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम् ॥ 16.2 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(1) Fearlessness, a pure and sāttvika temperament, 'jñāna-yoga-vyavasthiti' [that is, the well-calculated proportionment of jñāna (-mārga) and (Karma-) Yoga], generosity, endurance, sacrifice, 'svādhyāya' (that is, following the religion prescribed for one's status-in-life), performing austerities, straight-forwardness,

(2) harm-lessness, veracity, not getting angry, 'tyāga' (that is, Renunciation of the Fruit of Action), tranquility, 'apaiśūnya', (that is, overgrowing one's narrow-mindedness, and acquiring a generous frame of mind), kindness towards all beings, absence of avarice, mildness, feeling ashamed (of evil action), 'acāpala' (that is, giving up useless activity),

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तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।

भवन्ति संपदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥ 16.3 ॥

(16.3) brilliance, forgiveness, steadiness, purity, non-hatred, not being over-dignified, these (qualities), O Bhārata! are acquired by persons, who are born to godlike endowments.

[ These 26 qualities of godlike endowment are practically the same as the characteristics of 'jñāna' given in Chapter XIII (Gī. 13.7 – 11); and that is why 'ajñāna' has been included in the ungodlike characteristics in the next stanza. It is not possible to define the meaning of each word in the list of these 26 qualities in such a way that it will be different from the definitions of the other words; and such was not even the intention of the Blessed Lord. For instance, Harmlessness (ahiṃsā) is divided by some persons into 'kāyika' (bodily), 'vācika' (vocal), and 'mānasika' (mental); and, they look upon angrily hurting the mind of another person as a kind of harmfulness (hiṃsā). If one, similarly, considers the three aspects of 'purity', not being angry, not hating anyone, and other qualities can be included in 'mental purity'. There is a detailed description of self-restraint, austerities, veracity, and avarice in Chapters 160 to 163 of the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata. Out of these, the word 'dama' (self-restraint) has there been taken in an extensive meaning, so as to include forgiveness, steadiness, harmlessness, truth, pleading, and other several 25 or 30 qualities (Śān. 160); and in exposition of 'satya', {veracity}, that quality is said to include by itself the - following thirteen qualities, namely, truthfulness, equability, self-restraint, absence of jealousy, forgiveness, shame, patience, want of envy, sacrifice (yāga), meditation (dhyāna), 'āryatā ' (desire to benefit others), endurance, and kindness; and these various words have also been defined in the same place. Grouping together many qualities in this way under one

heading is a matter of learning: and if each quality is considered in this way, it will be necessary to write a treatise on everyone quality. All these qualities have been enumerated in the above stanza with the sole intention that one should thereby get a complete

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idea of the sātत्वika form of godlike endowment; and that, if some meaning 'is' not conveyed by any one word, it should be included in another word. I have interpreted the word "jñānayoga-vyavasthiti" in the above list, in accordance with Gī. 4.41 and 42, so as to support the Karma-Yoga. The words tyāga and dhṛti have been defined by the Blessed Lord Himself in Chapter XVIII, to which the reader is referred (18.4 and 29). Having thus mentioned the qualities included in godlike endowment, the Blessed Lord now describes the opposite, namely, the ungodlike endowment –]

दम्भो दर्पोऽभिमानश्च क्रोधः पारुष्यमेव च ।

अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ संपदमासुरीम् ॥ 16.4 ॥

(16.4) Hypocrisy, pride, ,over-dignity, and also, O Pārtha! anger, 'pāruṣya' (that is, cruelty), and ignorance are (acquired) by those who are born in the ungodlike endowment.

[ In the 164th and 165th chapters of the Śāntiparva of the Mahābhārata, some of these qualities have been described

and in the end, it is 'also stated who is to be called' a 'nṛśaṁsa', As 'ajñāna' (Ignorance) has been described in this stanza as one of the characteristics of the ungodlike endowment, it is clear that 'jñāna' (Knowledge) is a characteristic of the godlike endowment., Having in this way described the two kinds of natures one comes across in the world –]

दैवी संपद्विमोक्षाय निबन्धायासुरी मता ।

मा शुचः संपदं दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव ॥ 16.5 ॥

(16.5) (Out of these) The godlike endowment is considered (ultimately) productive of Release; and the ungodlike (endowment), productive of bondage. O Pāṇḍava! you are born in the godlike endowment! Do-not lament!

[ The Blessed Lord has thus shortly explained the fate of persons, possessing these two kinds of nature. He now. describes, in detail the ungodlike (āsuri) person–]

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द्वौ भूतसर्गौ लोकेऽस्मिन्दैव आसुर एव च ।

दैवो विस्तरशः प्रोक्त आसुरं पार्थ मे शृणु ॥ 16.6 ॥

(16.6) In this world, two kinds of beings come into existence, (one) godlike, and (the other) ungodlike. (Out of these) I have described to you in detail the godlike (variety); (now) O Pārtha! I am describing to you the ungodlike (variety), to which listen.

[ As the description given by the Blessed Lord in the previous chapters of how a Karma-Yogin. should behave, what the Brāhmī state is, who is to be called a 'sthitaprajña' or a 'bhagavadbhakta' or a 'triguṇātīta' ', and what Jñāna is etc., as also the description of the godlike endowment given in the first three stanzas is the same as the description of a person having a 'daiva' (godlike) nature, the Blessed Lord has here said that the 'daiva' variety has been described by Him in detail before. There is some reference in Chapter IX to the ungodlike endowment (9.11 and 12); but as that description is incomplete, it is completed in this chapter.]

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जना न विदुरासुराः ।

न शौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते ॥ 16.7 ॥

असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम् ।

अपरस्परसंभूतं किमन्यत्कामहैतुकम् ॥ 16.8 ॥

(16.7) Ungodlike persons do not understand what pravṛtti is, (that is, what should be done), nor what nivṛtti is, (that is, what should not be done); and, purity, good behaviour, or veracity have no place in them.

(16.8) These (ungodlike persons) say: "the whole world is unreal, 'apraṭiṣṭha' (that is, without any support), 'anīśvara' (that is, existing without a Parameśvara) and 'a-paraspara-sambhūta' (that is, not created one from the other); (in short) what can be the object of it, if not enjoying the objects of sense by human beings?"



[ Although the meaning of this stanza is clear, there is a great deal of difference of opinion about the interpretation of the words used in it. In my opinion, this is

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a description of the opinions of atheists like Cārvāka and others, who disputed both the Vedānta and Sāṃkhya doctrines relating to the construction of the world; and therefore, the words used in these stanzas refer to a doctrine contrary to both the Sāṃkhya and the Vedānta doctrines. The Vedāntist looks upon this world as perishable, and looks for the Imperishable Reality – "satyasya satyam" (Bṛ. 2.3.6) – in it; and looks upon that Real Element as the fundamental support or 'pratiṣṭhā' – "brahmapuccaṃ pratiṣṭhā" (Tai. 2.5.) – of it. But the demoniac persons believe that this world is 'a-satyam', that is, not containing 'satya' (Reality); and that it is, therefore, 'a-pratiṣṭham', that is, not having a pratiṣṭhā or support. But, a doubt may be raised that although the Imperceptible Parabrahman of the Vedāntists may in this; way be not acceptable to demoniac persons, they may be accepting the Perceptible Īśvara, Who is worshipped in the Path of Devotion. Therefore, the third word 'anīśvara' (ana + Īśvara) has been used in this stanza, in order to make it perfectly clear that such demoniac persons do not even accept the existence of an Īśvara in the world. When once the fundamental foundation of the world has thus been denied, one is also compelled to deny

the explanation of the order of creation of the world contained (i) in the Upaniṣadic words: "ātman ākāśaḥ sambhūtaḥ | ākāśād vāyuḥ | vāyor agniḥ | agner āpaḥ | adbhyaḥ pṛthivī | pṛthivyā oṣadhayaḥ | oṣadhibhyaḥ annaṁ | annāt puruṣaḥ | " [1] (Tai. 2.1); as also (ii) in the Sāṃkhya doctrine, which looks upon Prakṛti and Puruṣa as two independent Fundamental Elements, and looks upon all perceptible objects as being the result of the mutual support (annanyāśraya), that is, of the intermixture, of the sattva, rajas, and tamas constituents. Because, if this chain or order of succession is accepted, then, going backwards from all the objects in the visible world, one will have to admit

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that there is some origin for the world. Therefore, the demoniac people do not admit that the various objects in the world are parasparasambhūta, that is, created one from the other in a particular order. "When once such a belief about the creation of the world is fixed in the mind of any person, the

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[1] This quotation, which has not been translated into Marathi by the author, means: "Ether (or space), is born from the Self; the air, from Ether (or space); Fire, from the Air; Water, from Fire; Earth, from Water; vegetables, from the Earth; food, from the vegetables; and man from food." ~Translator.

human being itself becomes the most important object; and it necessarily follows, as a natural conclusion, that all the things in the world have been created only for satisfying the Desire (kāma-vāsanā) of that human being, and have no other purpose; and this meaning is conveyed by the words "kimanyat kāmahaitukam" that is "what other object can it have except to satisfy Desire?", used at the end of the stanza, and also by the subsequent stanzas. Some commentators refer the words "aparasparasambhūtaṁ" to the words 'kimanyaṁ'; and interpret the stanza in the following way, namely, "does one see any-thing, which is not created by the 'paraspara' that is, the union between the male and the female? No; and if no; such thing is to be found, then this world is certainly 'kāmahaituka' that is, come into existence as a result of the Desire (kāmeccchā) of the male for the female": and some others break up ' aparaspara ' in a very strange way as "aparaś ca paras ca = aparasparau"; and they interpret the stanza as meaning:— "aparaspara itself means 'male and female'; and the whole world being created from these two, the mutual desire of the male for the female is the only object for it; and there is no other object". But, this interpretation is not straightforward. 'aparaś ca paraś ca' will give rise to the compound "apara -para"; and there will not be the consonant 's', (the sakāra), in the middle, as is to be found in 'aparaspara'. Besides, if one considers the previous words 'a-satya', 'a-pratiṣṭhā' etc., it is clear that 'a-paraspara-sambhūta' must be a na-compound; and then one has "to admit that the word

'paraspara-sambhūta' means "the mutual creation (anyonya-janana) at guṇa-s (constituents) out of guṇa-s" described in Sāṃkhya philosophy (Gī. Ra. p.213 to 215). The two words 'anyonya' and 'paraspara' are synonymous with each other; and both these words are used in Sāṃkhya philosophy in describing the mutual

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effects of the constituents on each other (see Ma. Bhā. Śān. 305; and Sām. Kā. 12. 13). The Mādhvabhāṣya on the Gītā accepts this meaning; and in explaining how the various things in the world spring one out of the other, it gives the same stanza as in the Gītā, namely, "annād bhavanti bhūtāni" etc., that is, "rain-showers spring out of the sacrifice (because, the oblations thrown into the fire reach the Sun), food springs from rain-showers, and living beings spring from food" (Gī. 3.14; Manu. 3.79). But, as the statement in the Taittirīya Upaniṣad is more ancient and more exhaustive than this, I have quoted it above as an authority. Nevertheless, the words 'a-paraspara-sambhūta' in the Gītā are, in my opinion, indicative of the Sāṃkhya theory, rather than the Upaniṣadic theory, of the creation of the universe. The Blessed Lord now explains what effect this opinion of these demoniac persons, regarding the creation of the universe, has on their behaviour. The expression 'kāmahaituka' used at the end of the above stanza is now made further clear.]

एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य नष्टात्मानोऽल्पबुद्धयः ।

प्रभवन्त्युग्रकर्माणः क्षयाय जगतोऽहिताः ॥ 16.9 ॥

काममाश्रित्य दुष्पूरं दम्भमानमदान्विताः ।

मोहाद्गृहीत्वासद्ग्राहान्प्रवर्तन्तेऽशुचिव्रताः ॥ 16.10 ॥

चिन्तामपरिमेयां च प्रलयान्तामुपाश्रिताः ।

कामोपभोगपरमा एतावदिति निश्चिताः ॥ 16.11 ॥

(16.9) Accepting this view, these feeble-minded, soul-less, and malevolent persons perform cruel Actions, and come into existence only to destroy the world;

(16.10) and sheltering themselves behind 'Kāma' (that is, the desire to enjoy the objects of sense)', which can never be fully satisfied, these (demonic persons), saturated with hypocrisy, false dignity, and pride, entertain (in their mind) false conclusions, (that is, unreasonable ideas), and engage in dirty Actions,

(16.11) Similarly, being engrossed lifelong with immeasurable anxiety (to enjoy happiness), being steeped in enjoying the objects of sense, and firmly believing

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that that is everything;

आशापाशशतैर्बद्धाः कामक्रोधपरायणाः ।

ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसञ्चयान् ॥ 16.12 ॥

इदमद्य मया लब्धमिमं प्राप्स्ये मनोरथम् ।

इदमस्तीदमपि मे भविष्यति पुनर्धनम् ॥ 16.13 ॥

असौ मया हतः शत्रुर्हनिष्ये चापरानपि ।

ईश्वरोऽहमहं भोगी सिद्धोऽहं बलवान्सुखी ॥ 16.14 ॥

आढ्योऽभिजनवानस्मि कोऽन्योऽस्ति सदृशो मया ।

यक्ष्ये दास्यामि मोदिष्य इत्यज्ञानविमोहिताः ॥ 16.15 ॥

अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता मोहजालसमावृताः ।

प्रसक्ताः कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेऽशुचौ ॥ 16.16 ॥

आत्मसंभाविताः स्तब्धा धनमानमदान्विताः ।

यजन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दम्भेनाविधिपूर्वकम् ॥ 16.17 ॥

(16.12) being bound by hundreds of bonds of hope, and being subject to Desire and Anger, (these demoniac persons) entertain the ambition of amassing huge wealth, by injustice, in order to enjoy pleasure.

(16.13) (They say:) "To-day I have acquired this; (to-morrow) I shall get that desire satisfied; this wealth is (with me); and again that (wealth) also will become mine;

(16.14) I have killed this enemy; and I shall also destroy others; I am the Īśvara, I (alone) am the enjoyer; I am perfect, powerful and happy;

(16.15) I am wealthy, born in a good family; who other is there like me? I will perform sacrifices; I will give in charity, I will

enjoy myself". Being misguided as a result of Ignorance, as described in these words;

(16.16) being mis-directed by all sorts of ideas, being entangled in the cob-webs of mental confusion, and steeped in the enjoyment of the objects of sense, these (demoniac persons) fall into a filthy hell!

(16.17) (Who are) Self-praisers, who behave over-bearingly, and who are fall of the pride of wealth and dignity, these (demoniac persons), abandon Śāstric admonitions, and hypocritically perform only nominal

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sacrifices.

अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं च संश्रिताः ।

मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽभ्यसूयकाः ॥ 16.18 ॥

तानहं द्विषतः क्रूरान्संसारेषु नराधमान् ।

क्षिपाम्यजस्रमशुभानासुरीष्वेव योनिषु ॥ 16.19 ॥

आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि ।

मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम् ॥ 16.20 ॥

(16.18) Who, being bloated up by egoism, power, pride, desire, and anger, hate Me (the Parameśvara), Who am in their body as also in the bodies of others; (and who are) maligners,

(16.19) (these) haters, who commit unholy Actions, and (these) cruel, and lowest of men, are always thrown by Me into demoniac (that is, sinful) births in this worldly life.

(16.20) O Kaunteya! these foolish persons, thus taking?: birth in demoniac wombs, never come to me, and ultimately reach the lowest of low conditions.

[The Blessed Lord has so far described demoniac persons and the state they reach. HE now explains how one can escape from it –]

त्रिविधं नरकस्येदं द्वारं नाशनमात्मनः ।

कामः क्रोधस्तथा लोभस्तस्मादेतत्त्रयं त्यजेत् ॥ 16.21 ॥

एतैर्विमुक्तः कौन्तेय तमोद्वारैस्त्रिभिर्नरः ।

आचरत्यात्मनः श्रेयस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥ 16.22 ॥

(16.21) The gate-way of hell is of three folds, namely, Desire, Anger and Avarice; and it is destructive of one's Self; therefore, these three should be given up.

(16.22) O Kaunteya! when a man has escaped from these tamodvāra-s (that is, doors of darkness ~Translator.), he begins to act in a way which is beneficial to himself, and ultimately reaches-the highest state.

[ It is clear that when the three gates of hell are escaped from, a good state must be obtained. But, it has not so far been stated by what kind of conduct this can be done. Therefore, the Blessed Lord now explains what that path is –]



यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।

न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ॥ 16.23 ॥

तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।

ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥ 16.24 ॥

(16.23) (He) who has given up Śāstric directions, and begun to-do what he likes, does not attain Perfection; nor does he reach an excellent state.

(16.24) 'tasmāt' (that is, therefore ~Translator.), in order to decide the "kāryākārya-vyavasthiti" (that is, what ought to be done and what ought not to be done), you must accept the Scriptures (Śāstras) as authoritative; and after finding out what has been directed by the Scriptures, it is proper that you should act accordingly.

[ The word 'kāryākārya-vyavasthiti' used in this stanza clearly shows that the Gītā has been told, keeping before the mind the idea of Ethics; and it has been shown clearly in the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.66 to 69) that this is known as the Karma-Yoga-Śāstra.]

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे

श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे दैवासुरसंपद्विभागयोगो नाम

षोडशोऽध्यायः ॥ 16 ॥

Thus ends the sixteenth chapter entitled DAIVASURA-SAMPAD-VIBHAGA YOGA, in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa. and Arjuna, on the Yoga included in the Science of the-Brahman (that is on the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung: (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

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# CHAPTER XVII – śRADDHĀ-TRAYA- VIBHĀGA YOGA.

सप्तदशोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER XVII.

[ When a description has thus been made of persons, who maintain and protect the world by following the Karma-Yoga-Śāstra, as also of those, who, on the other hand, destroy the world, the question why these differences arise between men and .men, naturally springs up. The ordinary answer to that question, namely, "prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā" that is, "that is according to everybody's nature", has been given in Chapter VII above (7.20). But, as a full exposition about the three constituents namely, sattva, rajas, and tamas, has not been made in that chapter, it was not possible to give there a detailed explanation of these differences, which arise from Prakṛti. Therefore, these three constituents have been described in Chapter XIV; and after explaining in this Chapter how diverse kinds of faith etc., arise on account of these constituents, the entire subject-matter of Jñāna and Vijñāna has been concluded in' this chapter. In the same way, the reason for the differences in the Path of Devotion, mentioned

in the Chapter IX (see 9.23 and 24), becomes clear by the explanation given in this chapter. Arjuna first asks –]

अर्जुन उवाच

ये शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य यजन्ते श्रद्धयान्विताः ।

तेषां निष्ठा तु का कृष्ण सत्त्वमाहो रजस्तमः ॥ 17.1 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(17.1) O Kṛṣṇa! those who, notwithstanding that they are filled with Faith, yet perform sacrifice without observing the Scriptural methods, what should their 'niṣṭhā' (that is, mental condition) be supposed to be? Is it sāttvika, or rājasa, or tāmasa?

[ This is the doubt raised by Arjuna on the admonition given at the end of the last chapter that Scriptural methods should be followed. It sometimes happens that even having faith in the Scriptures, a man commits mistakes as a result of ignorance. For instance, instead of

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worshipping the All-pervading Parameśvara, as has been enjoined by the Śāstras, he may run after deities (Gī. 9.23). And the question of Arjuna is, what is the 'niṣṭhā' or state, or mental condition of such a person. This question does not relate to persons, who despise the Śāstras and religion for want of faith in them, that is, to demoniac persons.

Nevertheless, wherever there is occasion, the Actions of these people also have been described in this Chapter.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिनां सा स्वभावजा ।

सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति तां शृणु ॥ 17.2 ॥

सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत ।

श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः ॥ 17.3 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(17.2) This faith of living beings-is naturally of three kinds, sāttvika, rājasa, and tāmasa. Hear (how) that (is so).

(17.3) The faith of every person, O Bhārata! conforms to his 'sattva' (that is, to his inherent nature). Man is imbued with faith. In whatever matter (he puts) his faith, so is he (formed).

[The word 'sattva' in stanza 2 [1] means 'natural temperament', 'Reason' or 'conscience'. This word 'sattva' has been used in that sense in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad (Kaṭha. 6. 7); and in the Śāṃkarabhāṣya on the Vedānta-Sūtras also, the term 'sattva-kṣetrajña' has been used instead of kṣetra-kṣetrajña' (Ve. Sū. Śāṃ. Bhā. 1.2.12). In short, the word 'svabhāva' in stanza 2, and the word 'sattva' in stanza 3 are synonymous; because, the doctrine that nature is nothing but Prakṛti, and that Reason, and later on, Conscience, spring from Prakṛti, is accepted both in Vedānta and in Sāṃkhya philosophy. The

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[1] This ought to be stanza 3 and not stanza 2. ~Translator.

principle, "in whatever matter (he puts) his faith, so is he (formed) " is only a repetition' of the theories, "those' who worship deities, go to the deities" etc., which have appeared before (Gī 7.20, 23; 9.25); and I have discussed this subject in Chapter XIII of the Gītā-Rahasya (see Gītā. Ra. pp.589 to 598). When it is

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admitted that every person reaps a reward according to his desires, and that having or not having a particular inclination or desire depends on his Prakṛti (that is, nature), the question, how this nature should be improved, naturally arises. The answer to this question is: as the Ātman <Self> is independent, this bodily temperament can gradually be changed by practice and by renunciation; and this subject has been discussed in Chapter X of the Gītā-Rahasya, to which the reader is referred. (see pp.382 to 390). All that has to be considered for the moment is why and how these differences in faith arise. Therefore, after having stated that the faith changes according to a man's nature, the Blessed Lord now explains (i) what three kinds of faith are to be found in different men as a result of Prakṛti itself being composed of the three constituents sattva, rajas and tamas, and (ii) what the results of this difference are.]

यजन्ते सात्त्विका देवान्यक्षरक्षांसि राजसाः ।

प्रेतान्भूतगणांश्चान्ये यजन्ते तामसा जनाः ॥ 17.4 ॥

(17.4) Persons, who are 'sāttvika', that is, in whom the sattva (benevolent) constituent predominates, sacrifice to the deities; the rājasa (passionate), to gnomes (yakṣa-s) and to demons (rākṣasa-s); and other remaining tāmasa (ignorant persons) offer sacrifice to dead bodies and ghosts (bhūta-s).

[ The Blessed Lord has now explained the three classes into which men having faith in the Śāstras fall as a result of the difference of their Prakṛti, and He has also explained their characteristics. HE now describes the class of the lustful and hypocritical persons, who are such, as a result of not having faith in the Śāstras. It is clear that these persons are not sāttvika; but one cannot on that account simply call them 'tāmasa'; because, although their actions are contrary to the Śāstras, yet they have a tendency to perform these Actions; and, tendency to Action is a feature of the rajas constituent. In short, the adjectives sāttvika, rājasa, or tāmasa cannot be simply applied to such people. That is why men are divided into the two classes 'daivi'

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(godlike) and 'āsurī' (demoniac); and these evil-minded persons are put into the 'āsurī' class; the same idea has been conveyed in the two following stanzas.]

अशास्त्रविहितं घोरं तप्यन्ते ये तपो जनाः ।

दम्भाहंकारसंयुक्ताः कामरागबलान्विताः ॥ 17.5 ॥

कर्षयन्तः शरीरस्थं भूतग्राममचेतसः ।

मां चैवान्तःशरीरस्थं तान्विद्ध्यासुरनिश्चयान् ॥ 17.6 ॥

(17.5) But, those persons who, being imbued with hypocrisy and egoism, perform intense austerities contrary to the Śāstras, on the strength of Desire and Attachment,

(17.6) and oppress not only the group of the five primordial elements etc., in their body, but also Me, Who saturate that body, such indiscriminating (persons) may be understood to possess a demoniac temperament.

[ All the questions of Arjuna have now been answered. The faith of different persons may be sāttvika, rājasa or tāmasa according to their nature; and there being a consequent difference in their Actions, they will attain various goals according to their respective Actions; but, from that alone it cannot be said that a particular person will fall into the demoniac class. It is the duty of everybody to gradually improve his nature by making use of Freedom of Will (ātmavātantrya) and acting according to the Scriptures (sastras). These stanzas mean that those, who, instead of doing so, pride themselves on their own evil inherent nature, and flout the Śāstras are to be called 'āsurī' (demoniac). The Blessed Lord now explains the different kinds of food (āhārā), sacrifice (yajña), religious austerity (tapas) and charitable gifts



(dāna), which are the result of the sattva, rajas and tamas constituents of Prakṛti, just as there are different kinds of Faith; and He also explains how in consequence of diversity in nature, there is also diversity in Actions –]

आहारस्त्वपि सर्वस्य त्रिविधो भवति प्रियः ।

यज्ञस्तपस्तथा दानं तेषां भेदमिमं शृणु ॥ 17.7 ॥

(17.7) Now, the food which each person likes is also divided into three classes; and the same is the case with Sacrifice,

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Austerity and Knowledge. I will explain to you this difference, to which listen.

आयुःसत्त्वबलारोग्यसुखप्रीतिविवर्धनाः ।

रस्याः स्निग्धाः स्थिरा हृद्या आहाराः सात्त्विकप्रियाः ॥ 17.8 ॥

कट्वम्ललवणात्युष्णतीक्ष्णरूक्षविदाहिनः ।

आहारा राजस्येष्टा दुःखशोकामयप्रदाः ॥ 17.9 ॥

(17.8) The food liked by, a sātṭvika person is such as increases life, the sātṭvika temperament, strength, health, happiness, and love; it is savoury, viscous, and such as will be absorbed into the body, and will remain in it for a long time, and is enjoyable to the mind.

(9) The food liked by the rājasa persons is 'kaṭu' (that is, hot), pungent, saltish, very warm, irritating, dry, exciting;, and such as creates pain, lamentation, and disease.

[In Sanskrit 'kaṭu' means 'burning'; and 'tikta' means, 'bitter'; and accordingly, in Sanskrit medical treatises, mustard is described as 'kaṭu', and lemon or lime as tikta (See Vāgbhaṭa-Sūtra, Ch. 10). The words 'kaṭu' and 'tikhaṭ' in the Marathi language are corruptions of the words 'kaṭu' and 'tikta' in Sanskrit; but the meanings of those two words in the Marathi language have got interchanged. The Sanskrit and Marathi meanings of the word 'aparokṣa' are similarly interchanged; and this thing is important from the point of view of etymology.]

यातयामं गतरसं पूति पर्युषितं च यत् ।

उच्छिष्टमपि चामेध्यं भोजनं तामसप्रियम् ॥ 17.10 ॥

(15.10) A tāmasa person likes food, which has remained standing, (that is, which has become cold), is, tasteless, bad-smelling, which has become stale (for one day), , has been tasted (by other people), and. is also impure.

[ Not only does the sāttvika person like sāttvika food; the rājasa person, rājasa food; and the tāmasa person, tāmasa food; but conversely, by eating sāttvika food, the inherent nature of a person also gradually becomes pure or sāttvika, as has been stated in the Upaniṣads: cf. "āhāraśuddhau sattva śuddhiḥ"; (Chān. 7.26.2). Because, as the Mind and

the Reason are only evolutes of Prakṛti, if the food is sātṭvika, the inherent nature also becomes sātṭvika in consequence. These are the different kinds of food. The Blessed Lord now explains how there are three different kinds of sacrifices.]

अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्यज्ञो विधिदृष्टो य इज्यते ।

यष्टव्यमेवेति मनः समाधाय स सात्त्विकः ॥ 17.11 ॥

अभिसंधाय तु फलं दम्भार्थमपि चैव यत् ।

इज्यते भरतश्रेष्ठ तं यज्ञं विद्धि राजसम् ॥ 17.12 ॥

विधिहीनमसृष्टान्नं मन्त्रहीनमदक्षिणम् ।

श्रद्धाविरहितं यज्ञं तामसं परिचक्षते ॥ 17.13 ॥

(17.11) The Sacrifice performed without entertaining any desire for the fruit, and looking upon the performance of Sacrifice as a duty, and with a peaceful mind, and according to the Śāstric rites, is sātṭvika;

(17.12) but the Sacrifice performed with a desire for fruit, or only hypocritically (that is, for making an exhibition of one's riches), know that, such a sacrifice, O Bhārata-śreṣṭha! is a rājasa sacrifice;

(17.13) and, the Sacrifice performed without Scriptural ceremony, without the sacrifice of food, without the recitation of hymns without giving charitable gifts, and without faith, such a sacrifice is tāmasa .

[ Just as there are three kinds of food and sacrifice, so also are there three kinds of austerities. But austerities have first been divided into 'kāyika' (bodily), 'vācika' (vocal), and 'mānasika' (mental); and then the three sub-divisions of each of these as a result of the sattva, rajas and tamas constituents have been explained. The word 'tapa' in this place is -not to be taken, in the narrow meaning of 'going into a forest and mortifying the body according to the Pātañjala-Yoga', but means 'Yajña, Yāga, study of the Vedas, or whatever anybody's duty may be according to that one of the four classes to which he belongs; e. g. fighting for the Kṣatriya, trade for the Vaiśya, etc., which is the austerity (tapa) or penance for that particular person'. This comprehensive meaning of the word 'tapa' (religious austerities

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or Penance), given by Manu (Manu. 11.236) is intended in the following stanzas of the Gītā.]

§§ देवद्विजगुरुप्राज्ञपूजनं शौचमार्जवम् ।

ब्रह्मचर्यमहिंसा च शारीरं तप उच्यते ॥ 17.14 ॥

अनुद्वेगकरं वाक्यं सत्यं प्रियहितं च यत् ।

स्वाध्यायाभ्यासनं चैव वाङ्मयं तप उच्यते ॥ 17.15 ॥

मनः प्रसादः सौम्यत्वं मौनमात्मविनिग्रहः ।

## भावसंशुद्धिरित्येतत्तपो मानसमुच्यते ॥ 17.16 ॥

(17.14) Worshipping deities and Brahmins, as also those -who are learned; cleanliness, straight-forwardness, celibacy, -and harmlessness is called 'śārīra' (that is, kāyika or bodily) penance.

(17.15) Speech, which does not cause pain (to the mind), which is true, likeable, and beneficial and also, the practice of 'svādhyāya' (that is, one's own duties) is called 'vāṅmaya' (vācika or vocal) penance.

(17.16) Keeping one's mind pleased, gentleness, and maintaining 'mauna' (that is, silence, like a muni), mental control, and pure feelings is called 'mānasa' (mental) penance.

[ The words, satya, priya, and hita used in stanza 15 seem to refer to the dictum of Manu: "satyaṁ brūyāt priyaṁ brūyān na brūyāt satyaṁ apriyaṁ । priyaṁ ca nāṇṛtaṁ brūyād eṣa dharmaḥ sanātanaḥ" (Manu. 4. 138), that is, "one should speak what is true; one should speak what is sweet; one should not speak what is true, if it is not sweet; [1] this is the ancient religion". But Vidura has told Duryodhana in the Mahābhārata itself (Sabha. 63.17) that "apriyasya ca pathyasya vaktā, śrota hi durlabhaḥ" (that is, "of what is disagreeable and beneficial, the speaker as also the hearer are hard to find " ~Translator.). Each of the

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[1] The words " priyaṁ na nāṇṛtaṁ brūyāt" in the above quotation, which mean: "nor what is sweet, if it is false" are not included in. the author's Marathi translation of the Sanskrit quotation. ~Translator.

three divisions of Penance, namely, kāyika, vācika and mānasika falls into the following sub-divisions –]

§§ श्रद्धया परया तप्तं तपस्तत्त्रिविधं नरैः ।

अफलाकाङ्क्षिभिर्युक्तैः सात्त्विकं परिचक्षते ॥ 17.17 ॥

सत्कारमानपूजार्थं तपो दम्भेन चैव यत् ।

क्रियते तदिह प्रोक्तं राजसं चलमध्रुवम् ॥ 17.18 ॥

मूढग्राहेणात्मनो यत्पीडया क्रियते तपः ।

परस्योत्सादनार्थं वा तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ 17.19 ॥

(17.17) If each of these three kinds of religious austerities (or penance) is performed without entertaining the Desire for Fruit, and with excellent Devotion, and with a mind steeped in Yoga, it is called sāttvika;

(17.18) and when the austerities are performed with the intention that one should be appreciated, or held in dignity, or worshipped, or hypocritically, then those unsteady and fleeting austerities are here (that is, in the Scriptures) known as rājasa;

(17.19) those austerities, which, being self-injurious, are performed out of a foolish persistence, or with the idea of harming others [ by incantations for propitiation (jāraṇa), or causing death (māraṇa) etc.], are called tāmasa .

[ Having thus described the divisions of Penance, the Blessed Lord now explains the three divisions of charitable gifts (dāna).]

§§ दातव्यमिति यद्दानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे ।

देशे काले च पात्रे च तद्दानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम् ॥ 17.20 ॥

यत्तु प्रत्युपकारार्थं फलमुद्दिश्य वा पुनः ।

दीयते च परिक्लिष्टं तद्दानं राजसं स्मृतम् ॥ 17.21 ॥

(17.20) That gift, which is made with the conviction that it is one's duty to make the gift, after considering (the propriety of) the place, the time, and the (receiving) person, and to a person, who has not obliged the giver, is called sātṭvika;

(17.21) but the gift, which is made unwillingly, as a return for some obligation (received), or with the idea of getting

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same reward for it in future, is called 'rājasa';

अदेशकाले यद्दानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते ।

असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ 17.22 ॥

(17.22) and that gift, which is made at an improper place, or at an improper time, or to an improper person, unappreciatingly, or disrespectfully is called tāmasa .

[ The three divisions into which Knowledge, Action, Doers, Reason, Perseverance, and Happiness fall, similar to the divisions of food, sacrifice, penance, and gifts, are explained in the next chapter (Gī. 18.20 – 39). The differentiation between the constituents given in this chapter is here over. The Blessed Lord now refers to the definition of the Brahman (the brahma-nirdeśa); and proves the superiority and adoptability of sātṭvika Action mentioned above.. Because, a doubt is likely to be raised to the exposition made above, that, whether an Action is sātṭvika, rājasa, or tāmasa , it is still faulty and pain-causing; that, therefore, it is not possible to attain to the Brahman, unless all these Actions are given up; and that, if this is true, there is no sense in pointing out the difference, that a particular act is sātṭvika, and a particular act rājasa. The answer of the Gītā to this objection is that these divisions, of Action into sātṭvika, rājasa, and tāmasa are not. inconsistent with the Parabrahman. The canon (saṁkalpa), which defines the Brahman, includes sātṭvika Actions or good Actions; and therefore, it is proved beyond doubt that-these Actions are not metaphysically eschewable (see. Gī. Ra. p.338). All the Knowledge acquired by man regarding the nature of the Parabrahman is concentrated, in the definition composed of the three words "Om, Tat, Sat". Out of these 'Om' is the akṣara-brahman, and that has been described in different ways in different Upaniṣads (Praśna. 5; Kaṭha. 2.15 – 17; Tai. 1. 8; Chān. 1.1; Maitryu. 6.3, 4; Māṇḍūkya. 1. 12). And as this Brahman in the form of a consonant (varṇākṣara-rūpī) was the



only thing in existence at the commencement of the universe, all Action (or ritual)' commences with that letter. 'Tat' = 'that'

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means 'something beyond the ordinary Action', that is to say, the sãttvika Action performed desirelessly, and having given up the Hope of Fruit; and 'Sat' means pure Actions, performed according to Scriptural directions, notwithstanding that they may have been performed with a Hope for Fruit. Such is the meaning of this canon; and if this meaning is accepted, not only sãttvika, Actions, performed with a desireless frame of mind, but also good Actions performed according to Scriptural directions are included in the ordinary and commonly accepted definition of the Parabrahman. Therefore, it is wrong to say that these Actions are eschewable. Besides the 'tat' and 'sat' Actions, there remain the 'asat' Actions, that is, evil Actions. But, as such Actions are harmful both in this life and the next, they are not included in the definition, as has been stated in the last stanza. The Blessed Lord says—]

§§ ॐ तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः ।

ब्राह्मणास्तेन वेदाश्च यज्ञाश्च विहिताः पुरा ॥ 17.23 ॥

(17.23) The Parabrahman is defined (in the Scriptures) in three ways, as "Om-Tat-Sat". By this (very) definition [1] were the Brahmins, the Vedas, and the Sacrifices created formerly.

[It has been stated before that in the beginning of the world, the first Brahmin in the form of Brahmadeva, the gods, and Yajñas were first created (Gī. 3.10). But, the form of that Parabrahman, from which all this has been created, is contained in the three words 'Om', 'Tat' and 'Sat'. Therefore, this stanza means that the canon 'Om-Tat-Sat' is the root of the entire universe. The Blessed Lord now gives the respective connotations of the three words, 'Om', 'Tat', and 'Sat' in this canon, from the Karma-Yogic point of view –]

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§§ तस्मादोमित्युदाहृत्य यज्ञदानतपःक्रियाः ।

प्रवर्तन्ते विधानोक्ताः सततं ब्रह्मवादिनाम् ॥ 17.24 ॥

तदित्यनभिसन्धाय फलं यज्ञतपःक्रियाः ।

दानक्रियाश्च विविधाः क्रियन्ते मोक्षकाङ्क्षिभिः ॥ 17.25 ॥

सद्भावे साधुभावे च सदित्येतत्प्रयुज्यते ।

प्रशस्ते कर्मणि तथा सच्छब्दः पार्थ युज्यते ॥ 17.26 ॥

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[1] It is difficult to understand how anything can be created by a definition 1 (nirdeśa). Śrīdhara explains the word 'this' as meaning 'Parabrahman'.~ Translator.

यज्ञे तपसि दाने च स्थितिः सदिति चोच्यते ।

कर्म चैव तदर्थीयं सदित्येवाभिधीयते ॥ 17.27 ॥

(17.24) "tasmāt" (that is, 'since the world starts with this-canon'), Brahmins [1] (brahma-vādinah) start their Sacrifice, Charity, Penance, and all other Scriptural Actions first uttering the word 'OM'.

(25) By using the word 'TAT', people perform Actions, such as, Sacrifice, Penance, Charity etc., without entertaining the Hope of Fruit, in order to obtain Release.

(26) Reality (astitva) and: saintliness (sādhutva) are signified by the use of the word 'SAT'; and O Pārtha! the word 'SAT' is also applied to' proper (that is, good) Actions.

(27) Fixity (that is, having' an unswerving faith in Sacrifices, Austerities, and Charity) is also known as 'SAT'; and the Action performed for that. purpose is also known as 'SAT'.

[ Sacrifices, Austerities, and Charity are the important religious Actions; and the Actions performed for this purpose have been given the generic name 'yajñārtha-karma' (Action for the purpose of a Sacrifice) by the Mīmāṃsakas. Though a man may entertain the Hope for Fruit in performing these Actions, yet, as that Hope is consistent with Morality, these Actions fall into the category of 'Sat'; and all Desireless Action falls into the

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[1] This word 'Brahmin' has been coined by. me on the analogy of 'theist', 'atheist' etc. ~Translator.

class of 'Tat' = 'that', that is to say, 'that which is beyond this'.  
As both these kinds of Actions are thus included

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in the Brahma-saṁkalpa "Om-Tat-Sat", which is uttered at the commencement of every ritualistic Action, both of them must be said to be consistent with the attainment to the Brahman (see Gī. Ra. p.338). Now there remains only the 'asat'. The Blessed now explains what the result of that Action is –]

§§ अश्रद्धया हुतं दत्तं तपस्तप्तं कृतं च यत् ।

असदित्युच्यते पार्थ न च तत्प्रेत्य नो इह ॥ 17.28 ॥

(17.28) That oblation, which is thrown into the fire, or that, (gift), which is given, or that penance, which is performed, or any whatsoever (Action), which is done, without faith is called 'asat'. O Pārtha! that (Action) is not beneficial. whether after death (in the next life), or in this life.

[ In short, the commonly accepted canon, indicative of the form of the Brahman, includes all Actions performed with a desireless frame of mind, and merely as duties, and which are either sāttvika or are proper Actions, or good Actions, performed with a pure intention, and according to Scriptural directions. All other Actions are futile. This proves that it is not proper to ask anyone to give up Action, which is included in the definition of the Brahman, which came into existence with

Brahmadeva (Gī. 3.10), and which nobody can escape from. And that is why the above Karma-Yogic interpretation of the canon. 'Om-Tat-Sat' has been given in this chapter immediately after the disquisition on Karma. Because, a [mere description of the form of the Brahman has been given before in Chap. XIII, as also before that chapter. What the words 'Om', 'Tat', and 'Sat' must have originally meant has been explained at the end of Chapter IX of the Gītā-Rahasya (p.338). The description of the Brahman as "Saccidānanda" is now in vogue. But, as the definition of Brahman as 'Om-Tat-Sat' has been taken here, instead of the definition 'Saccidānanda', it is possible to draw an inference that the definition of the Brahman as "Saccidānanda", as a generally accepted definition, must have come into vogue after the date of the Gītā.]

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इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे श्रद्धात्रयविभागयोगो नाम  
सप्तदशोऽध्यायः ॥ 17 ॥

Thus ends the seventeenth chapter entitled SRADDHA-VIBHAGA YOGA in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman (that is, on

the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung, (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

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# CHAPTER XVIII – MOKṢA-SAMNYĀSA YOGA.

अष्टादशोऽध्यायः

CHAPTER XVIII.

[The eighteenth chapter is the summary of the entire 'Gītā-science. I shall, therefore, make a review (literally, 'cast a lion-glance') of all that has been stated so far (for greater details, see Chapter XIV of the Gītā-Rahasya). It is clear from Chapter ONE that the Gītā has-been told -in order to induce Arjuna to do his own duty, when he was on the point of giving up the warfare, which was his lot according to his own-status (svadharma), and of starting to beg. Arjuna was filled with the doubt that if he performed such evil actions as killing his own preceptors etc., his Self would not be benefitted, Therefore, in the beginning of Chapter TWO are mentioned the two ways of living one's life, which are accepted by Jñānins (i.e., Sages); namely, Sāṁkhya (saṁnyāsa or Renunciation), and Karma-Yoga (Yoga); and the ultimate conclusion has been arrived at, that though both these paths are equally productive of Release, yet the path of Karma-Yoga is the superior of the two (Gī. 5.2). According to the Path of Karma-Yoga, out of these

two, the Reason is supposed to be superior; if the Reason is steady and equable, Karma (Action) does not prejudicially affect anybody; no one has escaped Karma, and no one should give up Karma; it is quite enough if one gives up the Hope of Fruit; it is necessary to perform Karma at any rate for universal welfare, if not, for one's self; if one's Reason is pure, Jñāna does not conflict with Karma; and if one considers tradition, then Janaka and others behaved in the same way. These and other logical arguments have been advanced from Chapter THREE to Chapter FIVE. The next subject-matter is how to acquire this Equability of Reason, which is necessary for making Karma-Yoga successful, and how one ultimately attains Release, while following the Path of Karma-Yoga. In order to acquire this Equability of Reason, one must acquire sense-control (indriya-nigraha), and thereby fully realise that there is only one Parameśvara pervading the

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entire creation: there is no other way. Out of these, sense-control has been dealt with in Chapter SIX; and from Chapter VII to Chapter XVII, is given the explanation of (i) how the Knowledge of the Parameśvara is acquired while practising the Karma-Yoga, and (ii) what that Knowledge is. Out of these, Chapter SEVEN and Chapter EIGHT deal with the Spiritual and the Empirical Knowledge (jñāna-vijñāna) of (i) the Mutable and the Immutable and (ii) the Perceptible and . the



Imperceptible;. and Chapters NINE to TWELVE deal with the doctrine that though the Imperceptible form of the Parameśvara is superior to the Perceptible form, yet, worshipping the-Perceptible, without losing sight of the fact that there is. only one Parameśvara, is a path which is easy for everybody, because it is a matter which is capable of practical realisation. Then in Chapter THIRTEEN, the theory of the Body and the Ātman (kṣetra-kṣetrajña-vicāra) has been explained by saying that, that which is known as the 'avyakta' (Imperceptible) in the Consideration of the Mutable and the Immutable, is, indeed, the Ātman within, the body of a man; and thereafter, there has been a detailed consideration from Chapter FOURTEEN to Chapter SEVENTEEN of the way in which persons of diverse natures in the world, as also the other diversified expansion, of the world, came into existence, as a result of the constituents of Prakṛti – which subject-matter, is really an off-shoot of the Consideration of the Mutable and the-Immutable; and in this way, the exposition of Spiritual, and Empirical Knowledge has been completed. But every-where, the only advice given to Arjuna is that he should. perform Action; and the definite doctrine has been enunciated, that the Karma-Yogic way of living one's life,, namely, the path of "worshipping the Parameśvara, and doing all Actions with a pure mind, according to one's status, till death, and with the idea of dedicating every-thing to the Parameśvara" is, indeed the best path of life. When, in this way, the Karma-Yoga, based

on Knowledge, and in which Devotion is the supreme factor, has been explained in all its bearings, that very religion

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been summarised in Chapter EIGHTEEN; and Arjuna. has been induced to fight of his own free will. In this path, which has been pronounced to be the best of all by the Gītā, Arjuna has not been advised to take up the fourth state of life or Renunciation; but, it has been stated that the man, who lives according to this path of life is a 'nitya-saṁnyāsin' (perpetual ascetic), (Gī. 5.3). Therefore, the next question of Arjuna is whether the principle of (i) taking sometime or other to the fourth state of life, namely, the state of an ascetic, and (ii) literally abandoning all kinds of Action, is or is not included in the Path of Karma-Toga; and if not, then, what the meaning of the two words 'saṁnyāsa' and 'tyāga' is (see Gītā-Rahasya pp.481 to 487.)

अर्जुन उवाच

§§ संन्यासस्य महाबाहो तत्त्वमिच्छामि वेदितुम् ।

त्यागस्य च हृषीकेश पृथक्केशिनिषूदन ॥ 18.1 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(18.1) O Mighty-armed Hṛṣīkeśa! the principle of Renunciation (saṁnyāsa), and O Keśīdaityaniṣūdana! the principle of Abandonment (tyāga), I wish to. know these severally.

[ This question has not been asked with the intention of merely knowing the dictionary meanings of the words 'saṁnyāsa' and 'tyāga', or the difference between them. The root-meaning of both is "to give up"; and it is not that Arjuna did not know this. But, the Blessed Lord has nowhere advised the giving up of Action; and wherever Renunciation has been dealt with in the 4th, 5th, or 6th chapters (4.41; 5.13; 6.1), or in other places, He has directed that one should only make a 'tyāga ' (abandonment) of the Hope of Fruit (Gī. 12.11), and should make the 'saṁnyāsa' of, that is, 'dedicate', all Actions to the Parameśvara, (3.30; 12.6); whereas, if one considers the Upaniṣads, one comes across statements describing the-Path of Renunciation, which are indicative of the-Abandonment of Action, such as, "na karmaṇā na prajāyā,

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dhanena tyāgenaike amṛtatvam ānaśuḥ", that is, "many parsons have obtained Release by abandoning, or making a literal 'tyāga' of all Actions " (Kai. 1.2; Nārāyaṇa 12.3); or, " vedānta-vijñāna suniścitārthaḥ । saṁnyāsayogād yatayaḥ śuddharatvāḥ", that is, "yatins (ascetics), who have become pure by the Yoga of 'saṁnyāsa', in the shape of the Abandonment of all Actions" (Muṇḍaka. 3.3.6); or, "kim prajāyā kariṣyāmaḥ" that is, "what have we got to do with sons, grandsons, or other progeny" (Br. 4.4.22). It is quite clear that Arjuna had seen that the Blessed Lord was using the two

words 'saṁnyāsa' and 'tyāga' in some, other meaning, instead of applying them to the state of Renunciation, in the shape of the Abandonment of Action, out of the four states of human life, prescribed by the Smṛti texts, and he has asked this question in order to clear up that point. See the detailed elucidation of this subject-matter, which has been made by me in Chapter XI (pp.481 to 487) of the Gītā-Rahasya.]

श्रीभगवानुवाच

काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं संन्यासं कवयो विदुः ।

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्यागं विचक्षणाः ॥ 18.2 ॥

The Blessed Lord said:—

(18.2) Making a 'nāsyā' (that is, giving up) of (all whatsoever) Desire-prompted Actions, is known by wise people as 'Saṁnyāsa'; (and) making an Abandonment of the Fruit of all Actions is known by the learned as 'Tyāga'.

[ This verse clearly explains what is meant by the words 'saṁnyāsa' and 'tyāga' according to the Path of Karma-Yoga. But, as this opinion was not acceptable to the commentators, who belonged to the Path of Renunciation, they have stretched the meaning of this stanza to a considerable extent. In this stanza, the word 'kāmya' appears in the very beginning. Therefore, these commentators say, that the divisions of Actions into nitya [1]

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[1] For definitions 'nitya', etc., see Vol. I, p.74, et seq. ~Translator.

naimittika, kāmya, and niṣiddha, according to the Mīmāṃsā school are indicated here; and that according to the' advice of the Blessed Lord, only 'kāmya' (desire-prompted) "Actions should be given up". But, the followers of the Path of Renunciation have to declare that the 'nitya' and 'naimittika' Actions have also been included in the 'kāmya' Actions. Even doing so, the statement in the second half of the stanza that the Hope of Fruit should be given up, and that Actions should not be given up, (see stanza 6, later on) does not become consistent -with their mode of life. Therefore, these commentators have satisfied them-selves by passing a remark, on their own authority, that the Blessed Lord has here only showered empty praise on the Path of Karma-Yoga; and that His real intention was that all Actions should be given up. It is quite clear that this stanza cannot be satisfactorily explained from the doctrinal point of view of the School of Renunciation or other schools. It can be rightly interpreted only so as to support the Karma-Yoga, that is to say, so as to support the principle enunciated on numerous occasions in the Gītā, that one must continue to perform Actions, till death, . giving up the Hope of Fruit; and such a meaning indeed, is the straight and plain meaning. One must bear in mind, in the first place, that the word 'kāmya' does not indicate the division of Actions into nitya, naimittika, kāmya and niṣiddha, made by the Mīmāṃsā school. According to the doctrine of Karma-Yoga, all

Actions fall into only two divisions, namely, 'kāmya' that is, 'performed with Hope of Fruit' and 'niṣkāma', that is, 'performed giving up the Hope of Fruit'; and these two are respectively called "pravṛtta Karma", and "nivṛtta Karma" in the Manu-Smṛti (See Manu. 12. 88 and 89). "Whether the Actions are Daily (nitya), or Occasional: (naimittika) or Bodily (kāyika), or Vocal (vācika), or Mental (mānasika) or any other kind, according to the division into sāttvika, etc., they must fall into one of the two divisions, 'kāmya' (Desire-prompted) and 'niṣkāma' (Desireless); because, besides the two divisions, (i) 'having kāma', is, Hope of Fruit, and (ii) 'not having kāma', no third

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division is possible from the point of view of kāma ('Hope of Fruit'). If a particular Action is done for a particular purpose, having regard to the purpose for which it is prescribed by the Śāstras, e.g., the 'putreṣṭi' sacrifice for obtaining a son, then it becomes 'kāmya'; and if the same thing is done merely as a matter of duty, that is to say, without entertaining the Hope of Fruit, it becomes 'niṣkāma'. When all Actions are thus divided into 'kāmya' and 'niṣkāma' (or 'pravṛtta' and 'nivṛtta' according to the terminology of Manu), the Karma-Yogin gives up all Actions which are 'kāmya' or inspired by Desire. It, therefore, follows that even in the Karma-Yoga, it is necessary to perform a 'saṁnyāsa' (Renunciation) of all 'kāmya' (desired-prompted)

Actions. Now, let us turn to the second out of the two divisions of Karma, namely, the division of 'niṣkāma' (desireless) Actions. It is true that the Gītā definitely enjoins the performance of these niṣkāma Actions on the Karma-Yogin; but even in them, one has to perform the total 'tyāga' (abandonment) of the Hope of Fruit (GL 6. 2). Therefore, even the principle of 'tyāga' remains constant in the Gītā-religion. In short, in order to impress on the mind of Arjuna that the principles of 'saṁnyāsa' and of 'tyāga' both remain constant in Karma-Yoga, the Blessed Lord has in this stanza given these two definitions, namely, "'saṁnyāsa' means the total saṁnyāsa (Renunciation) of kāmya (desire-prompted) Action"; and "'tyāga' means the tyāga, or the Abandonment, of Hope of Fruit, in all Desireless Actions which are to be performed". In an earlier chapter, in showing that Saṁnyāsa (or Sāṁkhya) and Yoga are essentially the same, the word 'saṁnyāsin' (Gī. 5.3 – 6 and 6.1, 2), and later on in this chapter, the word 'tyāgin', have been defined ; in the same way; and the same is the proper meaning in the present stanza. The doctrine of the Smṛtis that, unless one follows the order of the brahmacāri, gr̥hastha, vānaprastha ;and saṁnyāsa states, and "ultimately takes up the saṁnyāsa state or the fourth state of life, in the shape of Renunciation of all Actions, Release is not possible", is not meant here. This clearly proves that even though the

Karma-Yogin may not take up the saffron-coloured robes of an ascetic and abandon all Actions, yet, since he is essentially following the same principles as a saṁnyāsin, there is no conflict between Karma-Yoga and the Smṛti texts. The Blessed Lord now summarises the dispute about Karma between the supporters of the Saṁnyāsa School and the supporters of the Mīmāṃsā school, and gives the ultimate decision of the Karma-Yoga-Science in the matter –]

§§ त्याज्यं दोषवदित्येके कर्म प्राहुर्मनीषिणः ।

यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यमिति चापरे ॥ 18.3 ॥

निश्चयं शृणु मे तत्र त्यागे भरतसत्तम ।

त्यागो हि पुरुषव्याघ्र त्रिविधः संप्रकीर्तितः ॥ 18.4 ॥

यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत् ।

यज्ञो दानं तपश्चैव पावनानि मनीषिणाम् ॥ 18.5 ॥

एतान्यपि तु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलानि च ।

कर्तव्यानीति मे पार्थ निश्चितं मतमुत्तमम् ॥ 18.6 ॥

(18.3) Some learned men say that as Karma is faulty, it must be given up (altogether); and others say that Sacrifice, Charity, Austerities, and Karma should never be abandoned.

(18.4) Therefore, O Bharataśreṣṭha! listen to My decision on the question of 'tyāga'. O Puruṣaśreṣṭha! 'tyāga' is said to be of three kinds.

(18.5) Sacrifice, Charity, Austerities, and Karma should not be abandoned under any circumstances. Those (Actions) must be



performed. Sacrifice, Charity and Austerities are 'pāvana' (that is, mind-purifiers), for (even) the wise.

(18.6) Therefore, even these Actions (such as, Sacrifice, Charity etc.) must be performed, without Attachment, and having abandoned the Fruit (like other desireless Actions, and for universal welfare). This, O Pārtha, is My definite (and correct) opinion.

[ This is a summary of the doctrine of Karma-Yoga enunciated before on numerous occasions, that the fault or the defect of Karma is not in the Karma itself, but is in the Hope of Fruit; and that all Actions

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should, therefore, be performed desirelessly, and having given up the Hope of Fruit. The Gītā does not countenance the doctrine of the Saṁnyāsa school, that all Action is faulty and, therefore, such as ought not to be performed (See Gītā. 18. 48 and 49). The Gītā advocates the saṁnyāsa (Renunciation) of only kāmya (desire-prompted) Actions. But, from this it would follow that since all the ritual and rites laid down by the Scriptures are 'kāmya' or 'based on desire' (Gī. 2.42 – 44), one must necessarily renounce them: and if that is done, the Cycle of Yajñas (yajñacakra) will come to an end (Gī. 13.16), . and the world will run the risk of being devastated. Then, what is to be done? The Gītā answers this question by saying that although

the Scriptures have prescribed the performance of Yajñas, Charity etc. for obtaining heaven, it is not that these very Actions cannot be performed desirelessly, and for universal welfare, with the idea, that performing sacrifices, or giving gifts, or performing austerities is one's duty in this life. {See Gī. 17.11, 17, and 20). Therefore, just as other Desireless Actions are to be performed according to one's status in life, so also should. Sacrifices, Charity and other Actions be performed, giving up the Hope of Fruit, and without Attachment, because, such actions are always "pāvana", that is, purifiers of the mind, and increase one's generosity. The words "etāny-api" = "even these", used in the original text mean – "yajña, dāna, and other acts also; in the same way as other desireless actions". When, in this way, these Actions are performed, giving up the Hope of Fruit – or from the devotional point of view only with the idea of dedicating them to the, Parameśvara –the wheel of the world continues to roll; and, as there is no more any Hope of Fruit in the mind of the doer, these Actions do not obstruct-Release; and all matters are properly settled. And this is, indeed, the final and definite doctrine of the Karma-Yoga-Science with reference to Actions. (see my commentary on Gītā. 2.45). As this difference between the Path of Karma of the Mīmāṃsā school and the Path of Karma-Yoga of the Gītā has been clearly expounded by me in the

Gītā-Rahasya (see pp.403 to 409 and pp.478 to 482), I shall not further labour the point here. To proceed: after the Blessed Lord has thus defined the meanings of the words 'saṁnyāsa' and 'tyāga' according to the Karma-Yoga-Science, in reply to the question of Arjuna, He further emphasises what He has said by showing the different ways of performing Karma, e. g., sāttvika etc., –]

§§ नियतस्य तु संन्यासः कर्मणो नोपपद्यते ।

मोहात्तस्य परित्यागस्तामसः परिकीर्तितः ॥ 18.7 ॥

दुःखमित्येव यत्कर्म कायक्लेशभयात्त्यजेत् ।

स कृत्वा राजसं त्यागं नैव त्यागफलं लभेत् ॥ 18.8 ॥

कार्यमित्येव यत्कर्म नियतं क्रियतेऽर्जुन ।

सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलं चैव स त्यागः सात्त्विको मतः ॥ 18.9 ॥

(18.7) That Action which is 'niyata' (that is, 'prescribed' according to one's religion) must not be abandoned. The Abandonment (tyāga) of such: Actions, as a result of Ignorance, is called 'tāmasa'.

(18.8) If Action is abandoned, fearing that it will produce bodily hardship, (that is, for the sole reason that it is painful), such Abandonment becomes rājasa; and he will not obtain (that which is) the result of tyāga.

(18.9) O Arjuna I when Action, which is 'niyata' (that is, 'prescribed') is performed as a 'kārya' (that is, only 'as a duty'),

and having abandoned the Attachment as also the Fruit, such Abandonment is looked upon as a sāttvika abandonment.

[ The interpretation by some commentators of the word 'niyata' as the ' nitya ' variety of Actions, out of the 'nitya', 'naimittika' etc., is not correct. The word 'niyata' must be taken here in the same sense as in the sentence 'niyataṁ kuru karma tvam' (Gī. 3. 8). As has been already stated above, the Mīmāṃsā terminology is not intended here. In Gī. 3.19, the word 'kārya' has been used instead of 'niyata'; and in stanza 9 above, the words 'kārya' and 'niyata' have both appeared in one and the same stanza. This stanza is a justification of the statement in stanza 2 at the commencement of the Chapter, that performing

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Actions, which have fallen to one's lot according to the Śāstras, looking upon such Actions as a 'duty' (see Gī. 3.19), is known as a sāttvika Abandonment; and that this is, indeed, what is known as 'saṁnyāsa' (Renunciation) or 'tyāga' (abandonment) in the Karma-Yoga-Science. The words 'tyāga' and 'saṁnyāsa' have thus been explained. Now, the Blessed Lord explains who the true 'tyāgin' or 'saṁnyāsin' is, according to this principle –]

§§ न द्वेष्ट्यकुशलं कर्म कुशले नानुषज्जते ।

त्यागी सत्त्वसमाविष्टो मेधावी छिन्नसंशयः ॥ 18.10 ॥

न हि देहभृता शक्यं त्यक्तुं कर्मण्यशेषतः ।

यस्तु कर्मफलत्यागी स त्यागीत्यभिधीयते ॥ 18.11 ॥

§§ अनिष्टमिष्टं मिश्रं च त्रिविधं कर्मणः फलम् ।

भवत्यत्यागिनां प्रेत्य न तु संन्यासिनां क्वचित् ॥ 18.12 ॥

(18.10) Who does not dislike a particular Action, because it is 'akuśala' (that is, not beneficial), and who is not attached to another Action, because it is profitable or beneficial, he is to be called a tyāgin or saṁnyāsin, endowed with the sattva-quality, intelligent, and free from doubt;

(18.11) because, whosoever is embodied, for him it is not possible to totally give up Action. Therefore, that man, who (without abandoning Action) has abandoned only the Fruit of Action, be alone is said to be a (real) tyāgin (that is, saṁnyāsin).

[The Blessed Lord now says that a person, who has become a tyāgin in this way, that is, by giving up merely the Hope of Fruit of Action, without giving up Action itself, is not affected by the bondage of any Action whatsoever –]

(18.12) The 'a-tyāgin', (that is, one, who does not abandon the Hope of Fruit), obtains after his death three kinds of Fruit of Action, namely, evil (aniṣṭa), good (iṣṭa) and mixed (miśra), (that is, partly good and partly evil); but the saṁnyāsin (that is, one who performs all Actions, having given up the Hope of Fruit) never gets (this Fruit), (that is, Actions can never bind him).

[ These ideas about 'tyāga', 'tyāgin', and 'saṁnyāsin ' have appeared before in the Gītā, in many places (Gī. 3.4 – 7; 5.2 – 10; 6.1); and they have been summarised here. The literal Abandonment (saṁnyāsa) of all kind of Action has never been accepted by the Gītā. According to the Gītā, the true or the nitya (perpetual) saṁnyāsin, is the .person who abandons only the Fruit of Action (Gī. 5.3). The real tyāga (Abandonment) is the Abandonment of the Hope of Fruit, which (Hope) is imbued with selfishness, that is to say, the Abandonment of Egoism. In order to further emphasise this proposition, further reasons are now-given –]

§§ पञ्चैतानि महाबाहो कारणानि निबोध मे ।

सांख्ये कृतान्ते प्रोक्तानि सिद्धये सर्वकर्मणाम् ॥ 18.13 ॥

अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणं च पृथग्विधम् ।

विविधाश्च पृथक्चेष्टा दैवं चैवान्न पञ्चमम् ॥ 18.14 ॥

शरीरवाङ्मनोभिर्यत्कर्म प्रारभते नरः ।

न्याय्यं वा विपरीतं वा पञ्चैते तस्य हेतवः ॥ 18.15 ॥

§§ तत्रैवं सति कर्तारमात्मानं केवलं तु यः ।

पश्यत्यकृतबुद्धित्वान्न स पश्यति दुर्मतिः ॥ 18.16 ॥

(18.13) O Mighty-armed! I will mention (to you) the five essentials, which have been mentioned in Sāṃkhya philosophy, as causes for anything to happen, to which listen.

(18.14) These are 'adhiṣṭhāna' (place), as also a doer various kinds of 'karaṇa' (that is, sādhana, implements), "various kinds of diverse 'ceṣṭā' (that is, Actions on the part of the doer), and along with these, the fifth, namely, Destiny.

(18.15) Whatever Action is commenced by man, whether by his body, or speech, or mind, whether that Action is 'nyāyā' (that is, justifiable) or 'viparīta' (that is, unjustifiable), these are the five causes of it.

(18.16) When this is the (true) state of things, that 'durmati' (evil-minded person ~Translator.) who, as a result of an undeveloped Reason, thinks that he alone is the Doer,

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does not (it must be said) understand anything.

यस्य नाहंकृतो भावो बुद्धिर्यस्य न लिप्यते ।

हत्वापि स इमाल्लोकान्न हन्ति न निबध्यते ॥ 18.17 ॥

(18.17) Who does not possess the belief that "I am the doer", and whose Reason is unattached, such a person, even destroying other persons, cannot be said to have killed them; and that. (Action) does not bind him.

[ The word 'sāṁkhya' in stanza 13 has been interpreted by some commentators as meaning the Vedānta-Śāstra; but as the next, that is, the fourteenth stanza, has appeared literally in the Nārāyaṇīya doctrine, and as there is a previous reference in that treatise to the two Kapila Sāṁkhya elements, namely, Prakṛti and Puruṣa, the word 'sāṁkhya', in my opinion, must be taken in this place to mean the ' Kapila Sāṁkhya philosophy '. The proposition that a man should not entertain the Hope for the Fruit of ' Action, nor the egotistical idea that he will do any particular thing, has often before appeared in the Gītā (Gī. 2.19; 2.47; 3.27; 5.8 – 11; 13.29); and that very proposition has been further emphasised here by saying, . that "roam is not the only reason for the effect of any Action coming into existence (see Gī. Ra. Ch. XI). Stanza 14, means, that whether human beings exist in this world or not, the uninterrupted activity of the world will go on according to the natural course of Prakṛti; and that, things, which a man believes to have been done by him, are not the result merely of his efforts, but have been brought about by his efforts combined with the other activities in the world. For instance, agriculture does not depend merely on the efforts of a man, but the natural qualities or the activities of other things like land, seed, rain, manure, oxen etc. are necessary, in order that agriculture should be successful. Some of the various activities in the world which are thus necessary to make , human efforts successful, are partly known to us; and man takes an effort after considering the favourableness or otherwise of these



factors. But, there are also several other activities in the world, of which man are not aware, and

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which are either favourable or unfavourable to the efforts he makes; and these are known as DESTINY; and this is ; said to be the fifth reason for any particular result coming about. If all these things are necessary in order that human effort should be successful; and if many of these things are not within one's control or even not known, then, (i) proudly saying that one will do a particular thing or (ii) entertaining a Hope of Fruit that a particular result .should follow the particular Action which one does, is (dearly a sign of folly (Gī. Ra. pp.452 to 455). But, stanza 17 is not to be understood as authorising that one, who has conquered the Hope of Fruit, may do any evil Action he likes. As that which ordinary persons do, is done by them with the idea of satisfying selfish purposes, they perform wrong actions. But, the man, whose selfishness, avarice, or Hope of Fruit, have been fully annihilated, and to whom all created beings are the same, is not capable of injury to another; because, the sin. is in the Reason and not in the Action. It, therefore, .necessarily follows, that, even if a man, (whose Reason has first been proved to be pure and clean), does something, which may appear improper from the worldly point of view, yet, the seed of that Action must be pure; and stanza 17 says that such a pure-minded person cannot be held

responsible for such Action. The principle of the sinlessness of the Sthitaprajña, that is, of the person, whose Reason has become pure, has also been enunciated in the Upaniṣads (See Kauṣī. 3.1 and Pañcadaśī, 14.16 and 17). But, as this subject-matter has been fully thrashed out by me in Chapter XII of the Gītā-Rahasya, I will not further labour the point here. As the Blessed Lord has, in this way, fully analysed the meaning of the words 'saṁnyāsa' and 'tyāga', which (analysis) was made necessary by the question of Arjuna; and proved that (i) true or sātṭvika Abandonment (tyāga) consists of performing . all Actions, which befall a person on account of Scriptural . directions proper for his status in life, after he has given up egoism and the Hope of Fruit; and that (ii) giving up .Action, is not true Abandonment, He now completes.

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from the Karma-Yogic point of view, the consideration of the divisions of Karma into sātṭvika, etc., started in Chap. XVII.]

§§ ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना ।

करणं कर्म कर्तेति त्रिविधः कर्मसंग्रहः ॥ 18.18 ॥

ज्ञानं कर्म च कर्ता च त्रिधैव गुणभेदतः ।

प्रोच्यते गुणसंख्याने यथावच्छृणु तान्यपि ॥ 18.19 ॥

(18.18) jñāna, jñeya and jñātā is the three-fold division of karma-codanā; and karaṇa, karma and kartā is the three-fold division of karma-saṁgraha.

(18.19) jñāna, karma, and kartā each falls into three sub-divisions by reason of the difference in the three (sattva, rajas, and tamas) constituents, as has been stated in the guṇasaṁkhyāna-śāstra (that is, in the Kapila-Sāṁkhya-Śāstra). Hear those (sub-divisions) just as they have been mentioned (which I am describing, to you).

[ The words 'karma-codanā' and 'karma-saṁgraha' are technical expressions. Before any act is performed by the organs, that Action has to be decided upon by the Mind. Therefore, this mental operation is called 'karma-codanā', that is ' the first inspiration to do the act '; and ' that has naturally three aspects, namely, the 'jñāna', the 'jñeya' and the 'jñātā'. For instance, before actually manufacturing an earthen pot, the potter (jñātā) says in his own mind: "I have to do this particular thing (jñeya), and it can be done in a particular way (jñāna)". This is the 'karma-codanā'. When in this way, a decision has-been arrived at in the Mind, the potter (kartā) gets together implements (karaṇa) like earth, wheel etc., and actually manufactures the earthen pot (karma). This is the karma-saṁgraha. Though the earthen pot is the 'karma' (Action) of the potter, it is also referred to as the 'kārya' of the earth. To proceed: it will be seen that the word 'karma-codanā' indicates the Action which takes place in the Mind or in the 'internal sense'; and the word 'karmasaṁgrahaḥ' indicates the

external Actions,. which correspond with that mental Action.  
In order to fully

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consider any Action, one must take into account both; the 'codanā' as well as the 'saṁgraha'. Out of these, the characteristics of jñāna, jñeya and jñātā (kṣetrajña) from the Metaphysical point of view have been considered before in Chapter XIII of the Gītā (13.18). Yet, as the characteristics of jñāna in the shape of Action are somewhat different, the word 'jñāna' out of the former triad, and the words 'karma' and 'kartā' out of the latter triad are now defined by the Blessed Lord –]

§§ सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते ।

अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥ 18.20 ॥

पृथक्त्वेन तु यज्ज्ञानं नानाभावान्पृथग्विधान् ।

वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसम् ॥ 18.21 ॥

यत्तु कृत्स्नवदेकस्मिन्कार्ये सत्तमहैतुकम् ।

अतत्त्वार्थवदल्पं च तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ 18.22 ॥

(18.20) That jñāna, by which one realises that in all 'vibhakta' (that is, diverse beings) there is only One 'avibhakta' (that is, undivided ~Translator.) and Inexhaustible 'bhāva' (that is, Principle), is called sāttvika Knowledge;

(18.21) that jñāna (Knowledge), which creates an impression: that there are diverse bhāva-s (Principles) in the various created things, is rājasa jñāna;

(18.22) but that insignificant Knowledge, which unreasonably and without understanding elementary principles, confines itself to only one thing, looking upon it as the all-in all, is tāmāsa jñāna.

[ These characteristics of the various kinds of jñāna are very comprehensive. The idea that one's wife and children is the entire 'saṁsāra' is tāmāsa Knowledge. When one rises a little above this frame of mind, one's vision becomes more comprehensive; and a man begins to look upon a fellow-townsmen or a fellow-countryman as his own. Nevertheless, the idea that men from different places or different countries are different from each other is still there. This Knowledge is rājasa; but, when one rises even above this stage and realises that there is only one Ātman in all created beings, that Knowledge is complete and sāttvikā. In short, seeing

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the Indivisible (avibhakta) in that which seems divided (vibhakta), or seeing unity in diversity, is the true characteristic of Knowledge; and he who has thus understood that "neha nānāsti kiṁcana", that is, " there is no manifoldness in this universe", is really Released; and, " mṛtyoḥ sa mṛtyum āpnoti

ya iha nāneva paśyati " (Br. 4.4.10), that is. "one who sees diversity in this world, falls into the cycle of birth and death", as has been stated in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka and in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad .(see Kaṭha. 4.11). This is all that is to be Realised in the world (Gī. 13.16); and this is the climax of Knowledge; because, when all things are looked upon as one, the mental process of synthesis has no further field to operate (Gī. Ra. pp.320 – 1). How this synthesising mental process , goes on, has been described in Chapter IX of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.295 to 297), to which the reader is referred. The effect of this sāttvika Knowledge on one's bodily nature, when it is indelibly impressed on the mind, has been described under the name of ' the qualities of godlike endowment' in the beginning of Chapter XVI; and in Chapter XIII, this kind of bodily nature has been called 'jñāna' (13.7 – 11). This clearly shows that (1) the perfection of the synthesising mental process and (2) the change in one's bodily nature as a result of such perfection, are both included by the Gītā in the connotation of the term 'jñāna' (Knowledge). Therefore, although the characteristics of Knowledge, as mentioned in stanza 20, may appear to be the description of a mental process, yet, that description includes the description of its effect, on the bodily nature, as has been made clear at the end of Chap. IX of the Gītā-Rahasya. To proceed: the Blessed Lord having thus described the various kinds of jñāna, now describes the various kinds of Karma –]

॥ नियतं सङ्गरहितमरागद्वेषतः कृतम् ।

अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत्तत्सात्त्विकमुच्यते ॥ 18.23 ॥

(18.23) That Action, which is performed by a man, without entertaining the desire for obtaining the Fruit, without entertaining love or hate (in the mind), without being attached,

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and as being 'niyata' (that is, prescribed) for him, according to his own dharma (religion), is called sāttvika Action;

यत्तु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहंकारेण वा पुनः ।

क्रियते बहुलायासं तद्राजसमुदाहृतम् ॥ 18.24 ॥

अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसा मनवेक्ष्य च पौरुषम् ।

मोहादारभ्यते कर्म यत्तत्तामसमुच्यते ॥ 18.25 ॥

(18.24) but that Action, which is performed with much labour (by a man), entertaining 'kāma' (that is, the desire for reward), or having an egotistical feeling, is called rājasa;

(18.25) and that Action, which is ignorantly commenced, without considering the 'anubandha' (that is, 'what its result will be'), or one's 'pauruṣa' (that is, what one's strength is), and whether (from it) there will or will not result destruction or 'himsā' (that is, 'harm' ~Translator.), is called tāmasa .

[ These three kinds of Action embrace all Action. Why Desireless Action has been called the sāttvika, or the best

Action has been explained in Chapter XI of the Gītā -Rahasya, to which the reader is referred. This is also the true 'akarma' or Non-Action (see my commentary on Gī. 4 16). As the doctrine of the Gītā is, that the Reason, (buddhi) is superior to the Action (karma), the Reason (frame of mind) of the Doer has each time been mentioned .in giving the above characteristics of Karma. It must be borne in mind that whether an Action is sāttvikā or tāmasa has not been determined by reference to the external effects of the Action (see Gī. Ra. Ch. XII, pp.530 – 531). Similarly, one is not to understand the Gītā as preaching that when one has abandoned the Hope of Fruit, one may do what one likes, without considering the pros and cons, and indiscriminately, as will appear from stanza 25; because, stanza 25 emphatically says that, Action performed without seeing the 'anubandha' or considering the Fruit, is tāmasa and not sāttvika (see Gī. Ra. pp.530 – 531). The Blessed Lord now explains the divisions into which all Doers fall, according to the same principle –]

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§§ मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।

सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥ 18.26 ॥

रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लुब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः ।

हर्षशोकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तितः ॥ 18.27 ॥



अयुक्तः प्राकृतः स्तब्धः शठो नैष्कृतिकोऽलसः ।

विषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते ॥ 18.28 ॥

(18.26) Who is not Attached; who does not say: 'I' or "mine"; who is not (mentally) moved, (both) when the-, work is successful and when it is not successful; (and) who (nevertheless) performs Action, being imbued with, enthusiasm and perseverance, he is called (a) sāttvika (Doer)

(18.27) who is attached to objects of sense, (and) avaricious;; who is filled with joy or sorrow (on the success or failure respectively of Action); who entertains the desire for obtaining the Fruit of Action; who is harmful and impure, such a Doer is called rājasa;

(18.28) who is 'ayukta' (that is, with an unsteady Reason), ignorant, proud, a cheater, 'naiṣkṛtika' (that is, one who deprives others of their goods); who is idle, 'dīrgha-sūtrī' (that is, difficult to get rid of; or, who takes a month to do what is ordinarily done in an hour), such a Doer is called tāmasa.

[The word 'naiṣkṛtika' (niṣ + kṛt = to out) in stanza 28 means "one who cuts the work of others, or ruins it". But some commentators accept instead the reading 'naiṣkṛtika'. 'niṣkṛta' has been defined as a 'cheat' in the Amarakośa: but, as the adjective 'cheat' has once appeared above, I have accepted the reading 'naiṣkṛtika'. Out of these three kinds of Doers, the sāttvika Doer is the true non-doer (akartā), the untouched-doer (alīpta-kartā), or the Karma-Yogin. This stanza clearly shows-that though he has given up the Hope of Fruit,

his enthusiasm, ambition and discrimination do not cease to exist. The Blessed Lord now applies this description of the three-fold development of the universe to Reason, (buddhi), Steadfastness (dhṛti), and Happiness (sukha).. The word ' buddhi ' in these stanzas has to be taken to mean.

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the 'vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ or the 'deciding mental organ 'described in Chapter II (2.41); and this subject has been fully explained in Chapter VI of the Gītā-Rahasya, pp.187 to 192, to which the reader is referred.]

§§ बुद्धेर्भेदं धृतेश्चैव गुणतस्त्रिविधं शृणु ।

प्रोच्यमानमशेषेण पृथक्त्वेन धनंजय ॥ 18.29 ॥

प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये ।

बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेत्ति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥ 18.30 ॥

यया धर्ममधर्मं च कार्यं चाकार्यमेव च ।

अयथावत्प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥ 18.31 ॥

अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसावृता ।

सर्वार्थान्विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥ 18.32 ॥

(18.29) O Dhanañjaya! I am mentioning to you in their-entirety the three divisions, arising as a result of the three -

constituents, into which Reason and Steadfastness fall, which-hear.

(18.30) pravṛtti (that is, commencing to perform any; particular Action), nivṛtti (that is, not commencing any particular Action), kārya (that is, what should be done), and akārya (that is, what should not be done), what should be feared, and what should not be feared, what leads to bondage and what to Release, that Reason, which understands all this, is called sāttvika;

(18.31) that Reason by which a proper discrimination is not arrived at between the righteous and the unrighteous, between the doable and the not-doable, such a Reason, O Pārtha! is rājasa;

(18.32) that Reason, which being steeped in ignorance, looks upon unrighteousness, as righteousness, and causes a viparīta (that is, wrong) view to be taken about everything, such a Reason, O Pārtha! is tāmasa .

[ When Reason has been divided in this way, Conscience (sadasadviveka-buddhi) no more remains an independent thing, but has to be included in the sāttvika buddhi, as has been explained in the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.191, 192), to which. the reader is referred.]

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§§ धृत्या यया धारयते मनःप्राणेन्द्रियक्रियाः ।

योगेनाव्यभिचारिण्या धृतिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥ 18.33 ॥

यया तु धर्मकामार्थान्धृत्या धारयतेऽर्जुन ।

प्रसङ्गेन फलाकाङ्क्षी धृतिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥ 18.34 ॥

यया स्वप्नं भयं शोकं विषादं मदमेव च ।

न विमुञ्चति दुर्मेधा धृतिः सा पार्थ तामसी ॥ 18.35 ॥

(18.33) That 'a-vyabhicāri' (that is, not swerving this side or that side) Steadfastness, with which the various activities of the Mind, life, and of the various senses are carried on by Yoga (in the shape of the Abandonment of the Fruit of Action) is sāttvika,

(18.34) O Arjuna! that Steadfastness by which dharma, kāma and artha (these puruṣārtha-s) are -carried on, and which entertains the desire for the fruit (of that dharma, artha or kāma ) as occasion arises, that Steadfastness, O Pārtha! is rājasa;

(18.35) that Steadfastness, by which a person becoming evil-minded, does not abandon sleep, fear, lamentation, dislike, and pride, such a Steadfast-ness or perseverance, O Pārtha! is tāmasa.

[The word 'dhṛti' literally means 'courage'; but, what is meant here is not physical courage, but mental determination.

Coming to a decision is something to be done by the Reason.

But, even if the Reason has come to a proper decision, such decision must remain steady. Giving, in this way, strength to

the determination, is a quality of the Mind. It is, therefore, said

that Steadfast-ness or moral courage is a quality, which arises by the co-operation of Mind and Reason. But, the description of , sātṭvika Steadfastness is not complete by merely saying that a man must carry on the activities of the Mind, life, and the organs by a 'courage', which is 'a-vyabhicāri', that is, which does not run here and there. One must also be told with reference to what these activities are to be performed, or what the Karma of this activity is; and that Karma has been described by the word 'Yoga'. Needless to say, it is not enough to define the word 'Yoga' as meaning merely concentrated Mind'. Therefore, I have

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interpreted it as meaning, 'Yoga in the shape of Abandonment of the Fruit of Action', having regard to the anterior and the posterior contexts. Just as in describing the characteristics of the sātṭvika Karma or the sātṭvika Doer, the quality of 'giving up the Attachment to the Fruit ' has been considered important, so in considering the characteristics of sātṭvika Steadfastness, the same quality must also be considered important. Besides, it is stated in the next stanza that rājasa Steadfastness desires the Fruit of Action. It, therefore, follows even from the next stanza, that sātṭvika Steadfastness must be the opposite, that is to say, must be indifferent to the Fruit of Action. In short, strength of determination is only a mental process; and in order to decide whether that determination is

good or bad, one must-take into account the Action to which that mental process is applied. If the Steadfastness is only in the matter of sleep, idleness, etc., then it is tāmasa ; if it is in the matter of performing the ordinary daily Actions 'with the Hope of Fruit, it is rājasa; and if it is in the Yoga, in the shape of the Abandonment of Fruit of Action, then it is sātत्वika. These are the sub-divisions of Steadfastness. Now, the Blessed Lord explains how happiness is sub-divided into three kinds as a result of the difference in the three constituents—]

§§ सुखं त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ ।

अभ्यासाद्रमते यत्र दुःखान्तं च निगच्छति ॥ 18.36 ॥

यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम् ।

तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् ॥ 18.37 ॥

(18.36) Now, O Bhārata-śreṣṭha! I will also explain the three Kinds of happiness, which hear. That, in which a man is engrossed by abhyāsa (that is, by constantly having it), and .in which, unhappiness comes to an end;

(18.37) that, which is like poison in the beginning, , but nectar-like in its effects; that happiness, arising from the satisfaction of the Self-engrossed Reason, (that is to say, Metaphysical happiness)

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is sātत्वika.

विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद्यत्तदग्रेऽमृतोपमम् ।

परिणामे विषमिव तत्सुखं राजसं स्मृतम् ॥ 18.38 ॥

यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनमात्मनः ।

निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥ 18.39 ॥

(18.38) That, which arises from the contact of the senses with the objects of sense (that is to say, Material happiness), which is nectar-like in the beginning, "but poisonous in its effects, that happiness is said to be rājasa.

(18.39) And that, which in the beginning as also in its anubandha, (that is, in the result) causes Ignorance, and which springs from sleep, idleness, or 'pramāda' (that is, forgetfulness of one's duties), that happiness is called tāmasa.

[I have interpreted the word 'ātma-buddhi' in the 37th stanza, as 'ātma-niṣṭhā-buddhi' (i.e., Self-engrossed Reason); but, taking the word 'ātma' to mean 'one's self', the word 'ātma-buddhi' can also be explained to mean "one's own Reason"; because, it has been stated above (6.21) that 'intense happiness' is only 'buddhi-grāhya' (Mind-Realised) . and 'atīndriya' (imperceptible to the senses). But, whichever meaning is taken, the result is the same. Even if it is said that real or permanent happiness does not lie in the enjoyment of the objects of sense, but is 'buddhi-grāhya' (Mind-Realised), yet, when one considers what is necessary to be done, in order that one's Mind should acquire this true and intense happiness, it becomes quite clear from Chapter VI, that this

intense happiness cannot be acquired, unless one's; Reason<sup>1</sup> has become Self-engrossed (GĪ. 6.21, 22). 'buddhi' is such an organ, that, on the one hand, it casts a glance towards the diffusion-out of the three-qualified Prakṛti, and on the other hand, it can also realise the Parabrahman in the shape of the Ātman, Which is at the root of that diffusion. Therefore, when by controlling the senses, one removes the Reason from the diffusion of Prakṛti embodied in the three constituents, and makes it introspective and self-engrossed –and that is all which can be acquired by the

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Pātañjala-Yoga – it (the Reason) becomes happy (prasanna); and man experiences true and intense happiness. For an explanation about the superiority of Metaphysical happiness, the reader is referred to the end of Chapter V of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.155 to 160). The Blessed Lord now explains in a general way that this three-fold difference is to be found everywhere in the world –]

§§ न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः ।

सत्त्वं प्रकृतिर्जैर्मुक्तं यदेभिः स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणैः ॥ 18.40 ॥

(18.40) There is nothing on this earth or in the firmament, or in the gods (that is, in the abode of the gods), which is 'mukta' (that is, free) from these three constituents of Prakṛti.



[ From stanza 18 upto here, the Blessed Lord has explained the different kinds jñāna, karma, kartā, buddhi, dhṛti, and sukha; and placed before the eyes of Arjuna, a picture of how diversity arises in the entire world as a result of the difference between the three constituents of Prakṛti; and He has thereby proved, that in the case of each of these various things, the sāttvika variety is the best and the most acceptable. The highest stage in even these sāttvika varieties, is known as the 'triguṇātītāvasthā' »(the state of being beyond the three constituents). That, 'triguṇātīta' or 'nirguṇa' is not a fourth and independent division according to the Gītā, has been explained by me in Chapter VII of the Gītā-Rahasya (pp.227, 228); and following the same argument, the sāttvika condition is also sub-divided in the Manu-Smṛti into uttama (best), madhyama (medium) and kaniṣṭha (inferior); and 'uttama sāttvika', is said to be productive of Release, and 'madhyama sāttvika' is said to be productive of heaven (Manu. 12.48 – 50 and 89 – 91). To proceed: this finishes the description of the diversity of Prakṛti in the world. The Blessed Lord now explains how the arrangement of the four classes has been made on the basis of this division of -constituents. It has been stated over and over again, that it is the duty of everyone in this world to perform all the

'niyata' Action, that is, all Action which is prescribed for aim, according to his own-status (svadharma), having given, up the Hope of Fruit, and maintaining his steadiness, enthusiasm, and determination (Gī. 18.7 – 9, 23 and 3.8); but, the essential factor by which that particular Action becomes 'niyata' (ordained) in each case, has not so far been explained anywhere. A succinct reference to the arrangement of the four classes has appeared before (4.13); and it has been stated there that the discrimination between the Doable and the Not-doable should be made by reference to the Śāstras (Gī. 16.24). But, the Scriptural arrangement of the four classes, which has been arrived at. on the basis of the division of Action according to the constituents, in order that the various activities of the world should go on in an orderly way, has not been explained in that place (see, Gī. Ra. pp.463 – 464; 555 – 556 and 697 – 898). For this reason, the Blessed Lord now explains the institution by means of which the duty of everybody in society becomes 'niyata', that is, 'ordained', namely, the four-class-arrangement, on the basis of the divisions of Prakṛti into three constituents; and He, at the same time, also explains what duties have been 'niyata' (ordained) for each of the four classes.]

§§ ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणां च परन्तप ।

कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभवैर्गुणैः ॥ 18.41 ॥

शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षान्तिरार्जवमेव च ।

ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम् ॥ 18.42 ॥

(18.41) O Parantapa! the respective duties of Brahmins (priests), Kṣatriyas (warriors), Vaiśyas (tradesman) and Śūdras (menials) have been individually fixed with reference to the qualities arising from their inherent natures, that is, from Prakṛti.

(18.42) The inherently natural duties of a Brahmin are peace, self-restraint, religious austerities, cleanliness, quietness, straight-forwardness (humility), Knowledge (that is, Spiritual Knowledge), Vijñāna (that is, Emperial Knowledge), and āstikya-buddhi (that is, belief in;

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a future world. ~Translator.).

शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दाक्ष्यं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम् ।

दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षात्रं कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥ 18.43 ॥

कृषिगौरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम् ।

परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम् ॥ 18.44 ॥

(18.43) The inherently natural duty (Karma) of the Kṣatriya is bravery, brilliance, courage, intentness, not running away from the battle, generosity, and exercising authority (over subject people).

(18.44) 'kṛṣi' (that is, agriculture) 'gorakṣya' (that is, the business of keeping cattle), and vāṇijya (that is, trade) is the

inherently natural duty of the Vaiśya; and in the same way, service is the inherently natural duty of the Śūdra.

[ The arrangement of the four classes has come into existence as a result of the difference between the inherently natural qualities: but, it is not that this explanation has for the first time been given in the Gītā. This explanation about the difference between the qualities has, with nominal differences, appeared (i) in the conversation between Nahuṣa and Yudhiṣṭhira, and in the conversation between the Brahmin and the Hunter in the Vanaparva of the Mahābhārata (Vana. 180 and 211); (ii) in the conversation between Bhṛgu and Bharadvāja in the Śānti-parva (Śān. 188); and (iii) in the conversation between Umā and Maheśvara in the Anuśāsanaparva (Aśva. 39. 11). It has been stated before that the various activities of the world result from the differences in the constituents of Prakṛti; and it has been proved that the four-class-arrangement, which determines what each of these classes has to do, is itself the result of the difference in the constituents of Prakṛti. The Blessed Lord now says, that (i) all these Actions must be carried on by everybody with a desireless frame of mind, that is, with the idea of dedicating them to the Parameśvara, as otherwise, the world will not go on; that (ii) a man acquires Perfection when he conducts himself in this way; and that (iii) it is not necessary to perform any other austerity for obtaining Perfection –]

§§ स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः ।

स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु ॥ 18.45 ॥

यतः प्रवृत्तिर्भूतानां येन सर्वमिदं ततम् ।

स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य सिद्धिं विन्दति मानवः ॥ 18.46 ॥

(18.45) That man, who is engrossed in the performance of his own duties (which have befallen him as a result of inherently natural qualities) acquires (by that alone) ultimate highest Perfection. Hear, how a man acquires Perfection by adhering to his own duties.

(18.46) When a man, (not merely by speech or flowers, but) by performing the Actions which befall him (according to his own religion), worships That, from Which all created beings have sprung, and Which has pervaded or occupied the whole of this Cosmos, he (merely thereby) attains Perfection.

[The Blessed Lord has explained that performing desirelessly, and with the idea of dedicating to the Parameśvara, the various duties, which befall one as a result of the four-class-arrangement, is a kind of worship of the Virāṭa-formed Parameśvara, and leads to Perfection (Gī. Ra. pp.611 – 612). But this duty, which has befallen one as a result of the division of Action according to divergent qualities, may appear faulty, undesirable, difficult, or unlikeable from another point of view. For instance, in the present case, the religion of Kṣatriyas may appear faulty, because it entails killing. Therefore, the reply to

the questions, (i) whether, in these circumstances, a man should give up his own religion and accept another religion (Gī. 3.35); or '(ii) should perform his own duties under any circumstances; and (iii) if so, how he should perform them, is now given by using the same argument as was used in the beginning of this Chapter in dealing with Actions likes Yajñas and Yāgas –]

§§ श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।

स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥ 18.47 ॥

(18.47) Though another religion may be easy of observance, and one's own Action according to the four-class-arrangement

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may be 'viguṇa' (that is, faulty), yet, it is more proper; when a person is performing his own inherently natural duty (that is, the duty which has been ordained for him according to the four-class-arrangement, based on natural inherent qualities), he does not thereby incur (any) sin.

सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत् ।

सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृताः ॥ 18.48 ॥

असक्तबुद्धिः सर्वत्र जितात्मा विगतस्पृहः ।

नैष्कर्म्यसिद्धिं परमां संन्यासेनाधिगच्छति ॥ 18.49 ॥

(18.48) O Son of Kunti! that Action, which is naturally (that is, by result of birth) 'niyata' (that is, ordained ~Translator.), according to the division of the qualities, such Action, even if improper, should not (ever) be given up; because, all ārambha (that is, activities) are enveloped in (some) fault (or other), as fire in smoke.

(18.49) (Therefore), when a man behaves, without being attached to anything, and having controlled his mind, and with a desireless heart, then, by Renunciation (of the Fruit of Action), the highest Perfection by Non-Action (naiṣkarmya-siddhi) is obtained.

[ The ideas that "one's own religion is better than the religion of another" (Gī. 3.35), and that "in order to obtain the naiṣkarmya-siddhi, it is not necessary to abandon Action" (Gī. 3.4), which had been mentioned before, have again been made clear in this summarising Chapter. The meaning of 'naiṣkarmya', and what true 'naiṣkarmya-siddhi' is, have been made clear by me in my commentary on Gī. 3.4, to which the reader is referred. When one remembers that persons following the Path of Renunciation aim only at Release, whereas, the Blessed Lord aims equally at Release and at Universal Welfare, the importance of this principle becomes easily clear. Universal Welfare, that is, 'the maintenance and sustenance of society', needs the man endowed with Spiritual and Empirical Knowledge, as much as the brave warrior, who wins success on the battle-field by his sword, the agriculturist, the merchant, the labourer, the carpenter, the

ironsmith, the potter, or even the butcher, who sells flesh. And, if it is said that Release cannot be obtained unless Action is abandoned, then, all these people will have to give up their respective business, and become ascetics! People, who adhere to the Path of Abandonment of Action (karma-saṁnyāsa) do not attach much importance to this; but, the vision of the Gītā is not narrow like that. Therefore, the Gītā says that, it is not proper for a person to give up the profession which has befallen him as a result of his status-in-life (adhikāra), and take up the profession of somebody else, on the ground that it is better. Whatever profession is taken, there is bound to be some weak point or other in it. For instance, that 'kṣānti' (forgiveness), which is considered to be specially proper for a Brahmin (18. 42), has attached to it the great fault that "a person, who is forgiving, is looked upon as weak" (Ma. Bhā. Śān. 160. 34); and it is a misfortune that one has to sell' flesh, if he follows the business of a butcher (Ma. Bhā.. Vana. 206); but it is not proper, on that account, to give up these Actions. When once one has accepted a particular Action as one's own, for whatever reason one may have done so [1], one must perform it, unattachedly, however difficult or undesirable it

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[1] This is difficult to understand. There can be only one reason for accepting the Action, namely, that it is 'Śāstra-ordained' (niyata).  
~Translator,



might be; because, the greatness or smallness of a man does not depend on the profession he follows; and his worth, from the spiritual point of view, depends on the frame of mind with which he follows that profession or performs that Action (Gī. 2.49). Though a man, having a peaceful mind and having realised the Unity, which underlies the entire creation, may be a merchant or a butcher, whether by caste or by profession, yet, if he follows his profession with a desireless frame of mind, he is as much entitled to Release, and is as great as the Brahmin, who is engaged in ablutions and religious duties, or the brave warrior. Not only is this so, but it is clearly stated in stanza 49, that the Release

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to be obtained by abandoning Action is equally well obtained by persons, who perform their various duties with a desireless frame of mind. This is, indeed, the deep principle which underlies the Bhāgavata religion; and it is clear from the history of Mahārāṣṭrīya saints, that it is not impossible to carry into effect this principle of modelling one's conduct accordingly (see Gī. Ra. Ch. XIII, pp.614 and 615). The Blessed Lord now explains how a man ultimately obtains Release by restricting himself to his own Actions –]

§§ सिद्धिं प्राप्नोति यथा ब्रह्म तथाप्नोति निबोध मे ।

समासेनैव कौन्तेय निष्ठा ज्ञानस्य या परा ॥ 18.50 ॥

बुद्ध्या विशुद्ध्या युक्तो धृत्यात्मानं नियम्य च ।  
शब्दादीन्विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा रागद्वेषौ व्युदस्य च ॥ 18.51 ॥  
विविक्तसेवी लघ्वाशी यतवाक्कायमानसः ।  
ध्यानयोगपरो नित्यं वैराग्यं समुपाश्रितः ॥ 18.52 ॥  
अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।  
विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥ 18.53 ॥  
ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।  
समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥ 18.54 ॥

(18.50) I will briefly explain to you, O Son of Kunti! how, when Perfection is thus obtained, the Brahman, which is the highest state of Jñāna, is gained (by that man); to which, listen.

(18.51) That man who, being inspired with a pure Reason and courageously controlling himself, gives up the objects (of the senses) such as, sound etc., and eschews love or hate;

(18.52) and stays in a 'vivikta' (that is, a chosen, or a solitary) place; who eats little, and whose body, speech, and mind are under his control, and who is continually meditative and apathetic;

अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम् ।  
विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते ॥ 18.53 ॥  
ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।  
समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥ 18.54 ॥

(18.53) who (similarly), having given up egoism, power, pride, desire, and anger and all 'parigraha' (that is, bonds), has become peaceful, or self-less, such a man is fit to become Merged-in-Brahman (brahma-bhūta).

(18.54) When he is merged in the Brahman, he becomes happy in mind, and does not entertain a desire for

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anything, and does not hate anything; and , becoming equal towards all beings, acquires intense Devotion towards Me.

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान्यश्चास्मि तत्त्वतः ।

ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् ॥ 18.55 ॥

सर्वकर्माण्यपि सदा कुर्वाणो मद्व्यपाश्रयः ।

मत्प्रसादादवाप्नोति शाश्वतं पदमव्ययम् ॥ 18.56 ॥

(18.55) By Devotion, he acquires the essential knowledge of how much I am, and who I am; and when he has thus essentially recognised Me, he becomes merged in Me.

(18.56) Even while he is performing all actions, having taken shelter in Me, he, by My favour, obtains a permanent and inexhaustible state.

[ It must be borne in Mind that the above description of the 'siddhāvasthā' is of a Karma-Yogin and not of a Karma-Saṁnyāsin. It has been stated already in the beginning, in

stanzas 45 and 49, that this description is of the person, who performs all actions without Attachment; and at the end, in the stanza 56, we find the words "even while he is performing all Actions". This description is similar to the description of a Devotee or of a *triguṇātīta*. Nay! Some words have even been taken from that description. For instance, the word *parigraha* in stanza 53 has appeared in the description of the Yogin in Chapter VI (6.10); the word "*na śocati na kāṅkṣati*" in the stanza 54, are to be found in the description of the Path of Devotion in Chapter XII (12.17); and the words "remaining in a '*vivikta*', that is, a chosen (solitary) place", have appeared before in Gī. 13.10. As this final state, attained by the Karma-Yogin, is the same as the final state reached by the Karma-Saṁnyāsin, from the purely mental point of view, commentators, subscribing to the Path of Renunciation, have got a chance of imagining that these descriptions support their school. But, I have stated any number of times before, that this procedure is not correct. To proceed: the Blessed Lord has, in the beginning of this Chapter, (i) defined '*Saṁnyāsa*' by stating, that *Saṁnyāsa* does not

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mean 'Abandonment of Action'; but means, 'Abandonment of the Hope of Fruit'; and (ii) maintained that Actions, such as

giving up of food etc. whether they are kāmya, nitya, or naimittika, must be performed like other Actions, without the Hope of Fruit, enthusiastically, and with an equable frame of Mind; and thereafter, He has explained the doctrine laid down by the Gītā by saying that (i) although the various matters in the world, such as, karma, kartā, buddhi etc., may be diverse as a result of the difference of qualities, yet the sāttvika quality is the best of all; that (ii) in performing, unattached, all the Actions, which have befallen anybody on account of his own-status, according to the four-class-arrangement, one thereby sacrifices to, and performs the worship of, the Parameśvara and thereby gradually acquires the Parabrahman or Release; that (iii) no other practice nor Saṁnyāsa in the form of Abandonment of Action is necessary for obtaining Release; and that (iv) by Karma-Yoga alone, all states of Perfection including Release are to be had. Now the Blessed Lord again and finally advises Arjuna to accept this path of Karma-Yoga –]

§§ चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्परः ।

बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य मच्चित्तः सततं भव ॥ 18.57 ॥

(18.57) saṁnyāsa (that is, having dedicated) all actions to Me, mentally, and having become devoted to Me, keep your mind always fixed on Me, taking shelter in the Yoga of (equable) Reason.

[ The word 'buddhi-yoga' (Yoga of Reason) has appeared before already in Chapter II (2.29); and there it has been interpreted to mean 'the device of performing Actions without

allowing one's Mind to be fixed on the Hope of Fruit', or 'the equable Reason'. This same meaning if intended in this place; and this is only a repetition of the statement of Chapter II, that Reason is better than or superior to Action. 'Karma-samnyāsa' is also defined here as meaning, 'mentally (that is, not by the actual Abandonment of Action, but merely by the Mind) dedicating all Actions to Me'; and the same idea has been

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expressed before in Chap. III (3. 20), and in Chap. V (5.13)]

मच्चित्तः सर्वदुर्गाणि मत्प्रसादात्तरिष्यसि ।

अथ चेत्त्वमहंकारान्न श्रोष्यसि विनङ्क्ष्यसि ॥ 18.58 ॥

(18.58) Fixing your mind on Me, you will, by My favour, conquer all difficulties in the shape of the beneficent or evil results of Actions. But, if you egotistically do not listen to Me, then (indeed) you will be lost.

[ The effect of Egoism, mentioned at the end-of stanza 58, is now further explained.]

यदहंकारमाश्रित्य न योत्स्य इति मन्यसे ।

§§ मिथ्यैष व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतिस्त्वां नियोक्ष्यति ॥ 18.59 ॥

स्वभावजेन कौन्तेय निबद्धः स्वेन कर्मणा ।

कर्तुं नेच्छसि यन्मोहात्करिष्यस्यवशोऽपि तत् ॥ 18.60 ॥

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।

भ्रामयन्सर्वभूतानि यन्त्रारूढानि मायया ॥ 18.61 ॥

तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारत ।

तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम् ॥ 18.62 ॥

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया ।

विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु ॥ 18.63 ॥

(18.59) Your egotistical belief that: "I will not fight", is futile. Prakṛti (that is, inherent nature) will compel you to do so.

(18.60) O Son of Kunti! being bound by the Action inherently natural to you, you will have to perform that, which, by Ignorance you do not wish to perform, you having become subject to another (that is, to your own Prakṛti or inherent nature).

(18.61) O Arjuna! the Īśvara, remaining in the hearts of all beings, agitates all beings by (His) Illusion, as though they were put into a machine.

(18.62) Therefore, O Bhārata 1 surrender yourself to Him whole-mindedly! By His favour, you will attain the highest tranquility and a permanent place.

(18.63) Thus have I explained to you this Knowledge, which is a mystery of mysteries. Think over all this fully, and do what you think best.

[ The dependence or subjectivity in the matter of Action, of which the mysterious principle has been explained in the above stanzas, has been fully dealt with in Chapter X of the Gītā-Rahasya, to which, the reader is referred. Although the Ātman is independent by itself, yet, if one considers the ordinary affairs of the world, that is, of Prakṛti, it will be seen, that the Ātman has no control over the Wheel of Action, which has been moving from times immemorial. Even if we may not wish them, nay, even if we may wish otherwise, hundreds and thousands of things are going on in the world; and either the results of their activity are felt by us, or we ourselves have to perform some part of that activity, and cannot say no. In these circumstances, the wise man performs these Actions, keeping his mind pure, and looking upon pain and happiness as alike: whereas, the fool gets entangled in the bonds of those Actions: this is the important difference between the behaviour of the two. The Blessed Lord has mentioned already in Chap. III, that "all created beings conform to their inherent nature, no amount of determination is of any avail" (Gī. 3.33). In these circumstances, all that the Science of Release, or Ethics, can say is that one should not become attached to Action. Thus far, I have considered the matter from the Metaphysical point of view. But, even from the point of view of Devotion, Prakṛti or Nature, is only a part of the Īśvara, And, therefore, the same proposition has been repeated in stanzas SI and 63, by giving credit for all Action to the Īśvara. All the



activities, which go on in the world, are got done by the Parameśvara, just as He wants them to be done. It is, therefore, proper that a wise man should abandon Egoism and surrender himself entirely to the Parameśvara. It is true that in stanza 63, the Blessed Lord has said, "do what you think best"; but, the meaning of that is very deep. Since no evil desire remains when the mind reaches a state of complete equability, whether by Knowledge or by Devotion, the 'Freedom of Will' of such a saint can never prejudicially affect either him or the world. Therefore, the true meaning of those words is: "when you have Realised

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this Knowledge (vimṛśya), you will be self-enlightened; and thereafter (not before), whatever Action may be voluntarily performed by you, will be consistent with morality, and correct; and when you have thus reached the state of a Sthitaprajña, it will no more be necessary for you to control your Desire". To proceed: I have shown at the end of Chap. XIV of the Gītā -Rahasya that Devotion has been given a higher place than Knowledge in the Gītā. Consistently with this proposition, the Blessed Lord now summarises the entire doctrine of the Gītā in terms of Devotion –]

§§ सर्वगुह्यतमं भूयः शृणु मे परमं वचः ।

इष्टोऽसि मे दृढमिति ततो वक्ष्यामि ते हितम् ॥ 18.64 ॥

मन्मना भव मद्रक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।

मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥ 18.65 ॥

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज ।

अहं त्वां सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥ 18.66 ॥

(18.64) I shall once more give you a final admonition, which is the mystery of all mysteries, to which listen. You are extremely beloved of Me; and therefore, I am going to tell you something, which is to your advantage.

(18.65) Keep your mind fixed on Me, become My devotee, offer sacrifice or worship to Me, and offer reverence to Me; (thereby) you will come and be merged in Me; this truth I am imparting to you as an absolute certainty, (because), you are my beloved (devotee).

(18.66) Give up all other religions, and surrender yourself to Me alone; I will redeem you from all sin; do not be afraid!

[ Those commentators, who subscribe only to the Path of Knowledge, do not appreciate this summing up, which, is in favour of Devotion. They, therefore, include 'adharma' (immorality) in 'dharma' (morality), and say (i) that this stanza conveys the same advice as that given in the Kaṭhōpaniṣad in the words: "give up morality and immorality, that which is done and that which is not yet done, the past and the future, and realise the Supreme

Brahman beyond all that" (Kaṭha. 2.14); and (ii) that it advises "one to surrender oneself to the Qualityless Brahman. The stanza from the Kaṭhōpaniṣad is also to be found in the description of the Qualityless Brahman in the Mahābhārata (Śān. 339.40; 331.44). But in both these places the two words 'morality' and 'immorality' have been distinctly mentioned, which is not the case in the Gītā. It is true that the Gītā accepts the Qualityless Brahman, and also propounds the doctrine that the Quality-less Brahman is the super-excellent form of the Parameśvara (Gī. 7.24). Yet, as the Gītā also maintains that the worship of the Perceptible is easy and excellent (12.5), and as the Blessed Lord is here referring to His own perceptible form, I am firmly of opinion that this summing up supports the Path of Devotion. Needless to say, the Qualityless Brahman is not intended here; and the word 'dharma' used here must be understood to mean, the religion of Harmlessness, the religion of Truth, the religion of Service of one's parents, the religion of Service of one's-preceptors, the religion of performing sacrificial ritual, the religion of Charity, the religion of Renunciation, and other ways of reaching the Parameśvara, which have been mentioned in the Scriptures. And, where the subject-matter has been discussed in the Śāntiparva (Śān. 344), and in the Anugītā (Aśva. 49), in the Mahābhārata, these ways of obtaining Release have been referred to by the word 'dharma'. But, the Blessed Lord definitely says in this place, with reference to the religion enunciated by the Gītā, that

Arjuna should not concern himself with these various religions, but should "surrender yourself to Me alone, I will redeem you, do not be afraid" (see Gī. Ra. Ch. XIII, pp.616 – 618). In short, the Blessed Lord, giving the advice nominally to Arjuna, but really to everybody, says that one should be deeply devoted to Him, and becoming engrossed in Him, perform all Actions, which become one's duties, according to one's own status, with a Reason devoted to Him; and that, thereby, one will acquire benefit not only in this life, but also in the next. This is what is known as KARMA-YOGA; and this is the

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sum. and substance of the Gītā-religion. The Blessed Lord now explains how to maintain and keep alive the tradition of this Gītā-religion, that is, of the Karma-Yoga based on Knowledge, and in which Devotion is the most important factor –]

§§ इदं ते नातपस्काय नाभक्ताय कदाचन ।

न चाशुश्रूषवे वाच्यं न च मां योऽभ्यसूयति ॥ 18.67 ॥

य इमं परमं गुह्यं मद्वक्तेष्वभिधास्यति ।

भक्तिं मयि परां कृत्वा मामेवैष्यत्यसंशयः ॥ 18.68 ॥

न च तस्मान्मनुष्येषु कश्चिन्मे प्रियकृत्तमः ।

भविता न च मे तस्मादन्यः प्रियतरो भुवि ॥ 18.69 ॥

(18.67) Do you never mention this (mystery) to anybody, who does not perform austerities, who has no devotion, nor a desire to hear it, nor to one who vilifies Me.

(18.68) He, who expounds this highest mystery to My devotees, will be filled with intense devotion towards Me, and will come and reach Me; about this, there is no doubt.

(18.69) And no one can be found among all men, who does something more dear to Me, than such a man; and no one will be more beloved of Me than him in this universe.

[ In continuation of this advice, given with the intention of maintaining the tradition of the Gītā, the Blessed Lord now explains the beneficent effects of following the Gītā-religion –]

§§ अध्येष्यते च य इमं धर्म्यं संवादमावयोः ।

ज्ञानयज्ञेन तेनाहमिष्टः स्यामिति मे मतिः ॥ 18.70 ॥

श्रद्धावाननसूयश्च शृणुयादपि यो नरः ।

सोऽपि मुक्तः शुभाँल्लोकान्प्राप्नुयात्पुण्यकर्मणाम् ॥ 18.71 ॥

(18.70) Whoever meditates on this conversation of us two -on religion, will be considered by Me as having worshipped Me by a Sacrifice of Knowledge.

(18.71) In the same way, he who follows this religion without carping, and with Faith, he also will be redeemed from all sin, and reach the happiest spheres, which are in store for saintly people.

[ In this way, the advice is over. Now, in order to find out whether or not Arjuna has properly understood this religion, the Blessed Lord asks him –]

§§ कच्चिदेतच्छ्रुतं पार्थ त्वयैकाग्रेण चेतसा ।

कच्चिदज्ञानसंमोहः प्रनष्टस्ते धनंजय ॥ 18.72 ॥

(18.72) O Pārtha! have you listened to all this, with a concentrated mind? (and) O Dhanañjaya! has your confusion, in the shape of Ignorance, now been totally destroyed?

अर्जुन उवाच

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।

स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥ 18.73 ॥

Arjuna said:—

(18.73) O Unfallen One! by Your favour has my ignorance been destroyed; and I have regained memory (of my duties); I am (now) free from doubt; I shall now do (fight) as told by You!

[ Those, who have got the traditional idea that the Gītā-religion advises the Abandonment of family life, have, without the slightest justification, stretched the meaning of the last, that is, of the 73rd stanza. If we consider of what Arjuna had lost memory, we see that in Chapter II. he has said:— "my mind does not understand what my 'dharma' or my duty is" (cf. "dharma saṁmūḍha cetāḥ"); and the plain meaning of the

above stanza is, that he has now remembered that duty. As the Gītā has been told in order to induce Arjuna to fight, and the Blessed Lord has, in various places, said:— "Do you, therefore, fight!" (Gī. 2.18; 2.37; 3.30; 8.7; 11.34), the words "I shall now do as told by You", can only mean, "I shall fight". To proceed: the conversation between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna is now over; now, with reference to the narration in the Mahābhārata, Sañjaya, having narrated this story to Dhṛtarāṣṭra, summarises his own narration —]

सञ्जय उवाच

§§ इत्यहं वासुदेवस्य पार्थस्य च महात्मनः ।

संवादमिममश्रौषमद्भुतं रोमहर्षणम् ॥ 18.74 ॥

Sañjaya said:—

(18.74) In this way, I heard this wonderful and.

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hair-raising conversation between Vasudeva and the noble-souled Arjuna.

व्यासप्रसादाच्छ्रुतवानेतद्ब्रह्ममहं परम् ।

योगं योगेश्वरात्कृष्णात्साक्षात्कथयतः स्वयम् ॥ 18.75 ॥

(18.75) By the favour of Vyāsa, I was enabled to hear this mystery of mysteries, that is, Yoga, —(of course, the Karma-

Yoga), –when Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of all Yoga Himself was personally expounding it.

[ It has been stated in the beginning of the Gītā, that as Vyāsa had given super-natural vision to Sañjaya, he could, sitting in his own place, see in reality whatever was happening in the battle-field; and that he used to repeat everything he saw to Dhṛtarāṣṭra. The Yoga, expounded by Śrī Kṛṣṇa was nothing but the Karma-Yoga (Gī.4.1 – 3); and Arjuna himself has referred to it before (Gī. 6.33), as 'Yoga' (the Yoga of Equability); and now, Sañjaya also refers to the conversation -between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in this stanza as ' Yoga '. From this, it becomes clear that Karma-Yoga is the subject-matter of exposition in the Gītā, according to the opinions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, as also of Sañjaya; and the expression (saṁkalpa) used to denote the end of the chapter at the end of every chapter also contains the word "yoga-śāstra". But the word 'Yoga', in the phrase 'Yogēśvara' is more comprehensive. The ordinary meaning of the word 'Yoga' is 'the device of, or the skill or proficiency in, performing any Action'; and in this sense, the bahurūpī (one who shows -many appearances) is said to perform his personifications by Yoga, that is, by skill. But, if one considers what is the best way in which Action can be performed, one has to say, that the way by which the Parameśvara, Who is essentially Imperceptible and Qualityless, gives Himself a perceptible appearance is the best 'Yoga' or device. This is referred to in the Gītā as the 'Īśvarī-Yoga' (Gī. 9.5; 11.8); and this is what is known as 'Mays' or 'Illusion' in Vedānta (Gī.



1.25). For that man, who has success-fully acquired this wonderful and unequalled Yoga, all other Yogas or devices are mere child's play. The Parameśvara is the Over-Lord of all these Yogas, or

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devices: that is why He has been referred to as the 'Yogeśvara', or the 'Lord of Yogas'. The word 'Yoga' in the phrase 'Yogeśvara' does not indicate the Pātañjala-Yoga.]

राजन्संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य संवादमिममद्भुतम् ।

केशवार्जुनयोः पुण्यं हृष्यामि च मुहुर्मुहुः ॥ 18.76 ॥

तच्च संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य रूपमत्यद्भुतं हरेः ।

विस्मयो मे महान् राजन्हृष्यामि च पुनः पुनः ॥ 18.77 ॥

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः ।

तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिर्धुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥ 18.78 ॥

(18.76) O King Dhṛtarāṣṭra! remembering this unprecedented: and holy conversation between Keśava and Arjuna, I experience joy over and over again.

(18.77) And King! thinking of that most wonderful Cosmic-Form of the Blessed Lord, I am filled with astonishment, and again with joy.

(18.78) And, in my opinion, wherever there is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of all Yoga, and the bow-holder Arjuna, there also will be found Wealth, Victory, Eternal Prosperity, and Morality.

[ In short, the doctrine enunciated here is, that wherever skill is combined with power, there do both ṛddhī (prosperity) and siddhi (success) take up their permanent abode; and that, mere skill, or mere power is not enough. When the ways and means of killing Jarāsaṁdha were being considered, Yudhiṣṭhira said to Śrī Kṛṣṇa: "andhaṁ balaṁ jaḍaṁ prāhuḥ praṇetavyaṁ vicakṣaṇaiḥ" (Sabha. 20.16), that is, "power is blind, and material; the wise must show it the way".

Thereupon, the Blessed Lord, saying: "mayi nītir balaṁ bhīme", (Sabha. 20.3), that is, " I am the store of diplomacy and Bhīma, that of strength", has taken Bhīma-sena with Himself, and skilfully brought about the death of Jarāsaṁdha by his (Bhīma's) hands. The one, who merely gives the diplomatic advice, may be looked upon as only half-wise [1]. Therefore, the word 'yogeśvara' means the 'Lord of Yoga, or skill', and the word 'dhanurdhara' means 'the fighter', and both these adjectives have been used here intentionally.]

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[1] This will be construed as a depreciatory reference to the Blessed Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa, which is, indeed, unfortunate. ~Translator.

इति तत्सदिति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां  
योगशास्त्रे  
श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे मोक्षसंन्यासयोगो नामाष्टादशोऽध्यायः ॥

18 ॥

Thus ends the eighteenth chapter named MOKSA-SAMNYASA YOGA in the dialogue between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna on the Yoga included in the Science of the Brahman (that is, on the Karma-Yoga) in the Upaniṣad sung (that is, told) by the Blessed Lord.

[ It must be borne in mind that the word 'saṁnyāsa' in the phrase ' mokṣa-saṁnyāsa-yoga ', means the 'saṁnyāsa or Renunciation of Desire-prompted Action'; and not 'the state of an ascetic', which is the fourth stage of life. As it has been propounded in this chapter that Release is obtained by mentally making a Saṁnyāsa or Renunciation of one's prescribed Actions, in favour of the Parameśvara, instead of by abandoning them, this chapter has been named 'Mokṣa-Saṁnyāsa-Yoga'.]

IN THIS WAY

THE RAHASYA-SAÑJĪVANA

being the translation, into the Marāṭhī vernacular, of the  
'Śrīmad Bhagavadgītā,  
together with the commentary on it, written by Bal Gangadhar  
Tilak, comes to an end.

In the Mahārāṣṭra, in the town of Poona, there lives one, who was born in a Brahmin family, and is devoted to the Śrutis, whose name is BAL, and who is the son of GANGADHARA, and whose surname is TILAK; and he has, by publishing the RAHASYA of the Gītā in the year 1837, of the Saka era, dedicated it to the LORD of ŚRĪ. [1]

**OM TAT SAT BRAHMĀRPAṆAM ASTU ŚĀNTIḤ PUṢṬIS TUṢṬIS  
CĀSTU.**

**ŚRĪ INDIRĀ 'RPAṆAM ASTU [2]**

—:O:—

p.1

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[1] The above dedication is in Marāṭhī verse in the original ~Translator

[2] This is my dedication (see Vol. I p. xxxvii). ~Translator.

# An Index of the Stanzas of the GĪTĀ

showing the first quarter of each stanza, by reference to the chapter and the stanza.

**Stanza (Chapter. Stanza. Line)**

ॐ

ॐ इत्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन् (8.13.1)

ॐ तत्सदिति निर्देशो ब्रह्मणस्त्रिविधः स्मृतः (17.23.1)

अ

अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः (4.17.2)

अकीर्तिं चापि भूतानि कथयिष्यन्ति तेऽव्ययाम् (2.34.1)

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यते (8.3.1)

अक्षराणामकारोऽस्मि द्वन्द्वः सामासिकस्य च (10.33.1)

अग्निर्ज्योतिरहः शुक्लः षण्मासा उत्तरायणम् (8.24.1)

अघायुरिन्द्रियारामो मोघं पार्थ स जीवति (3.16.2)

अच्छेद्योऽयमदाह्योऽयमक्लेद्योऽशोष्य एव च (2.24.1)

अजानता महिमानं तवेदं मया प्रमादात्प्रणयेन वापि (11.41.2)

अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे  
(2.20.2)

अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् (4.6.1)

अज्ञश्चाश्रद्धानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति (4.40.1)

अज्ञानं चाभिजातस्य पार्थ संपदमासुरीम् (16.4.2)

अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः (5.15.2)

अतत्त्वार्थवदल्पं च तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् (18.22.2)

अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः (15.18.2)

अत्येति तत्सर्वमिदं विदित्वा योगी परं स्थानमुपैति चाद्यम्  
(8.28.2)

अत्र शूरा महेष्वासा भीमार्जुनसमा युधि (1.4.1)

अथ केन प्रयुक्तोऽयं पापं चरति पूरुषः (3.36.1)

अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम् (12.9.1)

अथ चेत्त्वमहंकारान्न श्रोष्यसि विनङ्क्ष्यसि (18.58.2)

अथ चेत्त्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि (2.33.1)

अथ चैनं नित्यजातं नित्यं वा मन्यसे मृतम् (2.26.1)

अथ व्यवस्थितान्दृष्ट्वा धार्तराष्ट्रान्कपिध्वजः (1.20.1)

अथवा बहुनैतेन किं ज्ञातेन तवार्जुन (10.42.1)

अथवा योगिनामेव कुले भवति धीमताम् (6.42.1)

अथैतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रितः (12.11.1)

अदृष्टपूर्वं हृषितोऽस्मि दृष्ट्वा भयेन च प्रव्यथितं मनो मे  
(11.45.1)

अदेशकाले यद्दानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते (17.22.1)

अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च (12.13.1)

अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसावृता (18.32.1)

अधर्माभिभवात्कृष्ण प्रदुष्यन्ति कुलस्त्रियः (1.41.1)

अधश्च मूलान्यनुसंततानि कर्मानुबन्धीनि मनुष्यलोके  
(15.2.2)

अधश्चोर्ध्वं प्रसृतास्तस्य शाखा गुणप्रवृद्धा विषयप्रवालाः  
(15.2.1)

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् (8.4.1)

अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तमधिदैवं किमुच्यते (8.1.2)

अधियज्ञः कथं कोऽत्र देहेऽस्मिन्मधुसूदन (8.2.1)

अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर (8.4.2)

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आश्चर्यवच्चैनमन्यः शृणोति श्रुत्वाप्येनं वेद न चैव कश्चित्  
(2.29.2)  
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(2.29.1)  
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(11.50.2)

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काम्यानां कर्मणां न्यासं संन्यासं कवयो विदुः (18.2.1)  
कायेन मनसा बुद्ध्या केवलैरिन्द्रियैरपि (5.11.1)  
कारणं गुणसङ्गोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु (13.21.2)  
कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसम्मूढचेताः  
(2.7.1)  
कार्यकरणकर्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते (13.20.1)  
कार्यते ह्यवशः कर्म सर्वः प्रकृतिजैर्गुणैः (3.6.2)  
कार्यमित्येव यत्कर्म नियतं क्रियतेऽर्जुन (18.9.1)  
कालोऽस्मि लोकक्षयकृत्प्रवृद्धो लोकान्समाहर्तुमिह प्रवृत्तः  
(11.32.1)  
काश्यश्च परमेष्वासः शिखण्डी च महारथः (1.17.1)  
किं कर्म किमकर्मेति कवयोऽप्यत्र मोहिताः (4.16.1)  
किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम (8.1.1)  
किं नो राज्येन गोविन्द किं भोगैर्जीवितेन वा (1.32.2)  
किं पुनर्ब्राह्मणाः पुण्या भक्ता राजर्षयस्तथा (9.33.1)  
किमाचारः कथं चैतांस्त्रीन्गुणानतिवर्तते (14.21.2)  
किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रहस्त-मिच्छामि त्वां द्रष्टुमहं तथैव  
(11.46.1)



किरीटिनं गदिनं चक्रिणं च तेजोराशिं सर्वतो दीप्तिमन्तम्  
(11.17.1)

कीर्तिः श्रीर्वाक्च नारीणां स्मृतिर्मेधा धृतिः क्षमा (10.34.2)

कुतस्त्वा कश्मलमिदं विषमे समुपस्थितम् (2.2.1)

कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् (4.15.2)

कुर्याद्विद्वांस्तथासक्तश्चिकीर्षुर्लोकसंग्रहम् (3.25.2)

कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं प्रपश्यद्विजर्जनार्दन (1.39.2)

कुलक्षयकृतं दोषं मित्रद्रोहे च पातकम् (1.38.2)

कुलक्षये प्रणश्यन्ति कुलधर्माः सनातनाः (1.40.1)

कृपया परयाविष्टो विषीदन्निदमब्रवीत् (1.28.1)

कृषिगौरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम् (18.44.1)

केचिद्विलग्ना दशनान्तरेषु संदृश्यन्ते चूर्णितैरुत्तमाङ्गैः  
(11.27.2)

केशवार्जुनयोः पुण्यं हृष्यामि च मुहुर्मुहुः (18.76.2)

केषु केषु च भावेषु चिन्त्योऽसि भगवन्मया (10.17.2)

कैर्मया सह योद्धव्यमस्मिन् रणसमुद्यमे (1.22.2)

कैर्लिङ्गैस्त्रीन्गुणानेतानतीतो भवति प्रभो (14.21.1)

कौन्तेय प्रति जानीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति (9.31.2)

क्रियते तदिह प्रोक्तं राजसं चलमध्रुवम् (17.18.2)

क्रियते बहुलायासं तद्राजसमुदाहृतम् (18.24.2)

क्रियाविशेषबहुलां भोगैश्वर्यगतिं प्रति (2.43.2)

क्रोधाद्रवति संमोहः संमोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः (2.63.1)  
क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् (12.5.1)  
क्लैव्यं मा स्म गमः पार्थ नैतत्त्वय्युपपद्यते (2.3.1)  
क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते (15.16.2)  
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क्षुद्रं हृदयदौर्बल्यं त्यक्त्वोत्तिष्ठ परन्तप (2.3.2)  
क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत (13.33.2)  
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोरेवमन्तरं ज्ञानचक्षुषा (13.34.1)  
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानं यत्तज्ज्ञानं मतं मम (13.2.2)  
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगात्तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ (13.26.2)  
क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत (13.2.1)

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गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः (5.17.2)  
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(11.22.2)

गन्धर्वाणां चित्ररथः सिद्धानां कपिलो मुनिः (10.26.2)  
गाण्डीवं संसते हस्तात्त्वक्चैव परिदह्यते (1.30.1)  
गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयाम्यहमोजसा (15.13.1)  
गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्त इति मत्वा न सज्जते (3.28.2)  
गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येव योऽवतिष्ठति नेङ्गते (14.23.2)  
गुणानेतानतीत्य त्रीन्देही देहसमुद्भवान् (14.20.1)  
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गुरूनहत्वा हि महानुभावान् श्रेयो भोक्तुं भैक्ष्यमपीह लोके  
(2.5.1)  
गृहित्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गन्धानिवाशयात् (15.8.2)

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चञ्चलं हि मनः कृष्ण प्रमाथि बलवद्दृढम् (6.34.1)  
चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन (7.16.1)  
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चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्परः (18.57.1)

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छन्दांसि यस्य पर्णानि यस्तं वेद स वेदवित् (15.1.2)  
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जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः (4.9.1)

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जन्ममृत्युजरादुःखैर्विमुक्तोऽमृतमश्नुते (14.20.2)

जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधिदुःखदोषानुदर्शनम् (13.8.2)

जयोऽस्मि व्यवसायोऽस्मि सत्त्वं सत्त्ववतामहम् (10.35.2)

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जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् (3.43.2)

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ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परंतप (11.54.2)

ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि (16.24.2)

ज्ञानं कर्म च कर्ता च त्रिधैव गुणभेदतः (18.19.1)

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम् (13.17.2)

ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना (18.18.1)

ज्ञानं तेऽहं सविज्ञानमिदं वक्ष्याम्यशेषतः (7.2.1)  
ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्याद्विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत (14.11.2)  
ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति (4.39.2)  
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ज्ञानमावृत्य तु तमः प्रमादे संजयत्युत (14.9.2)  
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ज्ञानयोगेन सांख्यानां कर्मयोगेन योगिनाम् (3.3.2)  
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ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा (4.37.2)  
ज्ञानाग्निदग्धकर्माणं तमाहुः पण्डितं बुधाः (4.19.2)  
ज्ञानेन तु तदज्ञानं येषां नाशितमात्मनः (5.16.1)  
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ज्ञेयः स नित्यसंन्यासी यो न द्वेष्टि न काङ्क्षति (5.3.1)  
ज्यायसी चेत्कर्मणस्ते मता बुद्धिर्जनार्दन (3.1.1)

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ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते (13.17.1)

झषाणां मकरश्चास्मि स्रोतसामस्मि जाह्नवी (10.31.2)

त

त इमेऽवस्थिता युद्धे प्राणांस्त्यक्त्वा धनानि च (1.33.2)

तं तं नियममास्थाय प्रकृत्या नियताः स्वया (7.20.2)

तं तथा कृपयाविष्टमश्रुपूर्णाकुलेक्षणम् (2.1.1)

तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः (8.6.2)

तं विद्याद्दुःखसंयोगवियोगं योगसंज्ञितम् (6.23.1)

तच्च संस्मृत्य संस्मृत्य रूपमत्यद्भुतं हरेः (18.77.1)

तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदा (13.30.2)

ततः पदं तत्परिमार्गितव्यं यस्मिन्गता न निवर्तन्ति भूयः  
(15.4.1)

ततः शङ्खाश्च भेर्यश्च पणवानकगोमुखाः (1.13.1)

ततः श्वेतैर्हयैर्युक्ते महति स्यन्दने स्थितौ (1.14.1)

ततः स विस्मयाविष्टो हृष्टरोमा धनंजयः (11.14.1)

ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि (2.33.2)

ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् (6.26.2)

ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् (18.55.2)

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तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं मम तेजोऽशसंभवम् (10.41.2)  
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द

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पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः (15.13.2)

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पौण्ड्रं दध्मौ महाशङ्खं भीमकर्मा वृकोदरः (1.15.2)

प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्तिं च मोहमेव च पाण्डव (14.22.1)

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मय्यावेश्य मनो ये मां नित्ययुक्ता उपासते (12.2.1)  
मय्यासक्तमनाः पार्थ योगं युञ्जन्मदाश्रयः (7.1.1)  
मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय (12.8.1)  
मरीचिर्मरुतामस्मि नक्षत्राणामहं शशी (10.21.2)  
महर्षयः सप्त पूर्वे चत्वारो मनवस्तथा (10.6.1)



महर्षीणां भृगुरहं गिरामस्म्येकमक्षरम् (10.25.1)  
 महात्मानस्तु मां पार्थ दैवीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः (9.13.1)  
 महाभूतान्यहंकारो बुद्धिरव्यक्तमेव च (13.5.1)  
 महाशनो महापाप्मा विद्ध्येनमिह वैरिणम् (3.37.2)  
 मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि (2.47.2)  
 मा ते व्यथा मा च विमूढभावो दृष्ट्वा रूपं घोरमीदृङ्ममेदम्  
 (11.49.1)  
 मा शुचः संपदं दैवीमभिजातोऽसि पाण्डव (16.5.2)  
 मां च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते (14.26.1)  
 मां चैवान्तःशरीरस्थं तान्विद्ध्यासुरनिश्चयान् (17.6.2)  
 मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः (9.32.1)  
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 मात्रास्पर्शास्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः (2.14.1)  
 माधवः पाण्डवश्चैव दिव्यौ शङ्खौ प्रदध्मतुः (1.14.2)  
 मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः (14.25.1)  
 मामकाः पाण्डवाश्चैव किमकुर्वत संजय (1.1.2)  
 मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम् (16.20.2)  
 मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽभ्यसूयकाः (16.18.2)  
 मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते (8.16.2)  
 मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् (8.15.1)

मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते (7.14.2)  
 मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैवमात्मानं मत्परायणः (9.34.2)  
 मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे (18.65.2)  
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 मिथ्यैष व्यवसायस्ते प्रकृतिस्त्वां नियोक्ष्यति (18.59.2)  
 मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः (18.26.1)  
 मुनीनामप्यहं व्यासः कवीनामुशना कविः (10.37.2)  
 मूढग्राहेणात्मनो यत्पीडया क्रियते तपः (17.19.1)  
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 मोघाशा मोघकर्माणो मोघज्ञाना विचेतसः (9.12.1)  
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 मौनं चैवास्मि गुह्यानां ज्ञानं ज्ञानवतामहम् (10.38.2)

य इमं परमं गुह्यं मद्रक्तेष्वभिधास्यति (18.68.1)  
य एनं वेत्ति हन्तारं यश्चैनं मन्यते हतम् (2.19.1)  
य एवं वेत्ति पुरुषं प्रकृतिं च गुणैः सह (13.23.1)  
यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं मम (8.21.2)  
यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् (8.6.1)  
यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः (6.22.1)  
यं संन्यासमिति प्राहुर्योगं तं विद्धि पाण्डव (6.2.1)  
यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ (2.15.1)  
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यः प्रयाति त्यजन्देहं स याति परमां गतिम् (8.13.2)  
यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति नास्त्यत्र संशयः (8.5.2)  
यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः (16.23.1)  
यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति (8.20.2)  
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प्रपन्नम् (2.7.2)

यजन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दम्भेनाविधिपूर्वकम् (16.17.2)

यजन्ते सात्त्विका देवान्यक्षरक्षांसि राजसाः (17.4.1)

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यज्ज्ञात्वा मुनयः सर्वे परां सिद्धिमितो गताः (14.1.2)

यज्ञदानतपःकर्म न त्याज्यं कार्यमेव तत् (18.5.1)

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यज्ञशिष्टामृतभुजो यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम् (4.31.1)

यज्ञशिष्टाशिनः सन्तो मुच्यन्ते सर्वकिल्बिषैः (3.13.1)

यज्ञस्तपस्तथा दानं तेषां भेदमिमं शृणु (17.7.2)

यज्ञाद्भवति पर्जन्यो यज्ञः कर्मसमुद्भवः (3.14.2)

यज्ञानां जपयज्ञोऽस्मि स्थावराणां हिमालयः (10.25.2)

यज्ञायाचरतः कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते (4.23.2)

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यज्ञे तपसि दाने च स्थितिः सदिति चोच्यते (17.27.1)

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यततामपि सिद्धानां कश्चिन्मां वेत्ति तत्त्वतः (7.3.2)

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(11.28.1)  
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 श्रद्धया परयोपेतास्ते मे युक्ततमा मताः (12.2.2)  
 श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः (17.3.2)  
 श्रद्धावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः (3.31.2)  
 श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः (4.39.1)  
 श्रद्धावाननसूयश्च शृणुयादपि यो नरः (18.71.1)  
 श्रद्धावान् भजते यो मां स मे युक्ततमो मतः (6.47.2)  
 श्रद्धाविरहितं यज्ञं तामसं परिचक्षते (17.13.2)  
 श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला (2.53.1)  
 श्रेयान्द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञः परन्तप (4.33.1)  
 श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् (18.47.1)  
 श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् (3.35.1)  
 श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासाज्ज्ञानाद्ध्यानं विशिष्यते (12.12.1)  
 श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च (15.9.1)  
 श्रोत्रादीनीन्द्रियाण्यन्ये संयमाग्निषु जुह्वति (4.26.1)  
 श्वशुरान्सुहृदश्चैव सेनयोरुभयोरपि (1.27.1)

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः (4.3.1)  
स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परन्तप (4.2.2)  
स कृत्वा राजसं त्यागं नैव त्यागफलं लभेत् (18.8.2)  
स गुणान्समतीत्यैतान्ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते (14.26.2)  
स घोषो धार्तराष्ट्राणां हृदयानि व्यदारयत् (1.19.1)  
स च यो यत्प्रभावश्च तत्समासेन मे शृणु (13.3.2)  
स तया श्रद्धया युक्तस्तस्याराधनमीहते (7.22.1)  
स निश्चयेन योक्तव्यो योगोऽनिर्विण्णचेतसा (6.23.2)  
स बुद्धिमान्मनुष्येषु स युक्तः कृत्स्नकर्मकृत् (4.18.2)  
स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षयमश्नुते (5.21.2)  
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते (3.21.2)  
स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति (5.24.2)  
स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निरन चाक्रियः (6.1.2)  
स सर्वविद्भजति मां सर्वभावेन भारत (15.19.2)  
संकरस्य च कर्ता स्यामुपहन्यामिमाः प्रजाः (3.24.2)  
संकरो नरकायैव कुलघनानां कुलस्य च (1.42.1)  
संकल्पप्रभवान्कामांस्त्यक्त्वा सर्वानशेषतः (6.24.1)  
संतुष्टः सततं योगी यतात्मा दृढनिश्चयः (12.14.1)  
संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः (12.4.1)  
संन्यासं कर्मणां कृष्ण पुनर्योगं च शंससि (5.1.1)

संन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च निःश्रेयसकरावुभौ (5.2.1)  
संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि (9.28.2)  
संन्यासस्तु महाबाहो दुःखमाप्तुमयोगतः (5.6.1)  
संन्यासस्य महाबाहो तत्त्वमिच्छामि वेदितुम् (18.1.1)  
संभवः सर्वभूतानां ततो भवति भारत (14.3.2)  
संवादमिममश्रौषमद्भुतं रोमहर्षणम् (18.74.2)  
सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वांसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत (3.25.1)  
सखेति मत्वा प्रसभं यदुक्तं हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखेति  
(11.41.1)  
सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा फलं चैव स त्यागः सात्त्विको मतः (18.9.2)  
सङ्गात्संजायते कामः कामात्क्रोधोऽभिजायते (2.62.2)  
सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः (9.14.1)  
सत्कारमानपूजार्थं तपो दम्भेन चैव यत् (17.18.1)  
सत्त्वं प्रकृतिजैर्मुक्तं यदेभिः स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणैः (18.40.2)  
सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसंभवाः (14.5.1)  
सत्त्वं सुखे संजयति रजः कर्मणि भारत (14.9.1)  
सत्त्वात्संजायते ज्ञानं रजसो लोभ एव च (14.17.1)  
सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत (17.3.1)  
सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि (3.33.1)  
सद्भावे साधुभावे च सदित्येतत्प्रयुज्यते (17.26.1)

समं कायशिरोग्रीवं धारयन्नचलं स्थिरः (6.13.1)  
समं पश्यन्हि सर्वत्र समवस्थितमीश्वरम् (13.28.1)  
समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम् (13.27.1)  
समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च तथा मानापमानयोः (12.18.1)  
समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् (18.54.2)  
समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च कृत्वापि न निबध्यते (4.22.2)  
समदुःखसुखं धीरं सोऽमृतत्वाय कल्पते (2.15.2)  
समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टाश्मकान्ननः (14.24.1)  
समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि (2.53.2)  
समासेनैव कौन्तेय निष्ठा ज्ञानस्य या परा (18.50.2)  
समोऽहं सर्वभूतेषु न मे द्वेष्योऽस्ति न प्रियः (9.29.1)  
सम्प्रेक्ष्य नासिकाग्रं स्वं दिशश्चानवलोकयन् (6.13.2)  
सम्भावितस्य चाकीर्तिर्मरणादतिरिच्यते (2.34.2)  
सर्गाणामादिरन्तश्च मध्यं चैवाहमर्जुन (10.32.1)  
सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च (14.2.1)  
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते (4.33.2)  
सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं सन्तरिष्यसि (4.36.2)  
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् (12.11.2)  
सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं प्राहुस्त्यागं विचक्षणाः (18.2.2)  
सर्वकर्माणि मनसा संन्यस्यास्ते सुखं वशी (5.13.1)

सर्वकर्माण्यपि सदा कुर्वाणो मद्व्यपाश्रयः (18.56.1)

सर्वगुह्यतमं भूयः शृणु मे परमं वचः (18.64.1)

सर्वज्ञानविमूढांस्तान्विद्धि नष्टानचेतसः (3.32.2)

सर्वतः पाणिपादं तत्सर्वतोऽक्षिशिरोमुखम् (13.13.1)

सर्वतः श्रुतिमल्लोके सर्वमावृत्य तिष्ठति (13.13.2)

सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम् (12.3.2)

सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथात्मा नोपलिप्यते (13.32.2)

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते (13.23.2)

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते (6.31.2)

सर्वद्वाराणि संयम्य मनो हृदि निरुध्य च (8.12.1)

सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन्प्रकाश उपजायते (14.11.1)

सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज (18.66.1)

सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि (6.29.1)

सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः (6.31.1)

सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते (5.7.2)

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिकाम् (9.7.1)

सर्वभूतानि संमोहं सर्गे यान्ति परन्तप (7.27.2)

सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते (18.20.1)

सर्वमेतदृतं मन्ये यन्मां वदसि केशव (10.14.1)

सर्वयोनिषु कौन्तेय मूर्तयः संभवन्ति याः (14.4.1)

सर्वसंकल्पसंन्यासी योगारूढस्तदोच्यते (6.4.2)  
सर्वस्य चाहं हृदि संनिविष्टो मत्तः स्मृतिर्ज्ञानमपोहनं च  
(15.15.1)  
सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूप मादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात्  
(8.9.2)  
सर्वाणीन्द्रियकर्माणि प्राणकर्माणि चापरे (4.27.1)  
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते (14.25.2)  
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी यो मद्भक्तः स मे प्रियः (12.16.2)  
सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धूमेनाग्निरिवावृताः (18.48.2)  
सर्वार्थान्विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी (18.32.2)  
सर्वाश्चर्यमयं देवमनन्तं विश्वतोमुखम् (11.11.2)  
सर्वेऽप्येते यज्ञविदो यज्ञक्षपितकल्मषाः (4.30.2)  
सर्वेन्द्रियगुणाभासं सर्वेन्द्रियविवर्जितम् (13.14.1)  
सहजं कर्म कौन्तेय सदोषमपि न त्यजेत् (18.48.1)  
सहयज्ञाः प्रजाः सृष्ट्वा पुरोवाच प्रजापतिः (3.10.1)  
सहसैवाभ्यहन्यन्त स शब्दस्तुमुलोऽभवत् (1.13.2)  
सहस्रयुगपर्यन्तमहर्यद्ब्रह्मणो विदुः (8.18.1)

सांख्ययोगौ पृथग्वालाः प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिताः (5.4.1)

सांख्ये कृतान्ते प्रोक्तानि सिद्धये सर्वकर्मणाम् (18.13.2)  
सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति तां शृणु (17.2.2)  
साधिभूताधिदैवं मां साधियज्ञं च ये विदुः (7.30.1)  
साधुरेव स मन्तव्यः सम्यग्व्यवसितो हि सः (9.30.2)  
साधुष्वपि च पापेषु समबुद्धिर्विशिष्यते (6.9.2)  
सिंहनादं विनद्योच्चैः शङ्खं दध्मौ प्रतापवान् (1.12.2)  
सिद्धिं प्राप्नोति यथा ब्रह्म तथाप्नोति निबोध मे (18.50.1)  
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते (2.48.2)  
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते (18.26.2)  
सीदन्ति मम गात्राणि मुखं च परिशुष्यति (1.29.1)  
सुखं त्विदानीं त्रिविधं शृणु मे भरतर्षभ (18.36.1)  
सुखं दुःखं भवोऽभावो भयं चाभयमेव च (10.4.1)  
सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः (6.32.2)  
सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ (2.38.1)  
सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद् बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम् (6.21.1)  
सुखसङ्गेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चानघ (14.6.2)  
सुखिनः क्षत्रियाः पार्थ लभन्ते युद्धमीदृशम् (2.32.2)  
सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते (6.28.2)  
सुदुर्दर्शमिदं रूपं दृष्टवानसि यन्मम (11.52.1)  
सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति (5.29.2)

सुहृन्मित्रार्युदासीनमध्यस्थद्वेष्यबन्धुषु(6.9.1)  
सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत् (13.15.2)  
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत (1.21.2)  
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये विषीदन्तमिदं वचः (2.10.2)  
सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये स्थापयित्वा रथोत्तमम् (1.24.2)  
सेनानीनामहं स्कन्दः सरसामस्मि सागरः (10.24.2)  
सोऽपि मुक्तः शुभाँल्लोकान्प्राप्नुयात्पुण्यकर्मणाम् (18.71.2)  
सोऽविकम्पेन योगेन युज्यते नात्र संशयः (10.7.2)  
सौभद्रश्च महाबाहुः शङ्खान्दध्मुः पृथक्पृथक् (1.18.2)  
सौभद्रो द्रौपदेयाश्च सर्व एव महारथाः (1.6.2)  
स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् (9.32.2)  
स्त्रीषु दुष्टासु वाष्ण्ये जायते वर्णसंकरः (1.41.2)  
स्थाने हृषीकेश तव प्रकीर्त्या जगत्प्रहृष्यत्यनुरज्यते च  
(11.36.1)  
स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत् ब्रजेत किम् (2.54.2)  
स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव (2.54.1)  
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव (18.73.2)  
स्थित्वास्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति (2.72.2)  
स्थिरबुद्धिरसंमूढो ब्रह्मविद्ब्रह्मणि स्थितः (5.20.2)  
स्पर्शान्कृत्वा बहिर्बाह्यांश्चक्षुश्चैवान्तरे भ्रुवोः (5.27.1)



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(Note:—The original text of the author was not indexed at all. The first index above (of stanza-beginnings), and this and the three following indexes were first added to the fourth Marathi edition of the text, published in 1923, after the death of the author, as stated in the Publisher's foreword to that edition. The references to the pages in this 1923 Marathi edition, in this and the three following indices, have been replaced by the corresponding references to the pages of the present English edition, except such as I have not been able to trace. Also, the words in the original indexes, which had been arranged according to the Marathi alphabet, have been re-arranged by me according to the English Alphabet, letters with diacritical signs, being indexed as if there were no such signs, (ii) in front of a figure, or row of figures, means Vol. II~Translator.)

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Note:— Even if this index is merely glanced at, readers will get an idea of its arrangement. The names of authors and of their works have been given according to the Marathi alphabet, and works of the same nature have been grouped together, as will be realised by the readers on the face of the index. Those personages, who have been referred to in the course of the expositions of the various subject-matters, for expounding the true import of the Gita, have already been indexed separately (see p.77 to 79 above. ~Translator.); and the last. Index of Definitions includes technical words. (see p.89 et. seq. ~Translator.).

(The above is the heading of the Index added to the 1923 Marathi edition of the text, which was published after the death of the author. The words in this index had been arranged according to the Marathi alphabet, as stated above, and I have re-arranged them according to the English alphabet, except such references as I have been unable to trace in spite of due and diligent search. Letters with diacritical signs have been indexed as if there were no such signs; and the figure (ii)

before a figure or row of figures-means Volume II.

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—:O: —

# INDEX OF DEFINITIONS

## Of Terminological Expressions given in the Gita-Rahasya.

This Index was first added to the 1923 Marathi edition of the text published after the death of the author. The index, which is. of Sanskrit expressions, had been arranged in .the original, according to the Sanskrit alphabet, and has been re-arranged by me according to the English alphabet, letters with diacritical signs being indexed, as if there were no such signs. After each Sanskrit word, I have, wherever necessary, added its English translation in brackets, as appearing in the translation of the text. I have named this as Part I of the Index of Definitions. In Part II, I have indexed the English translation of the same words, according to alphabetical arrangement, and placed within brackets after the English word its Sanskrit equivalent as appearing in Part I of the Index. Part II has been specially prepared by me for the convenience of readers, who are unacquainted with the Sanskrit language. The figure (ii) before a figure or row of figures means Vo] II. ~Translator.

(N. B. This Index covers only pages 1 to 8S1 of the translation.)

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# **SOME GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT HINDU RELIGIOUS TREATISES.**

(N. B. – This note was not written by the author, but was first included in the 1923 edition of the Marathi text, which was published after the death of the author in 1920. ~Translator.).

Among the treatises, on which the Hindu Religion is based, the Vedas are the most superior and the most ancient, from the point of view of importance and chronology; and the Saṁhitās, the Brāhmaṇas, and the Upaniṣads are included in them. The Karma-kāṇḍa, consisting of Yajñas and Yāgas (religious sacrifices), and the Jñāna-kāṇḍa, consisting of Metaphysical conceptions, both spring from this triad. Nevertheless, the Upaniṣadic treatises form the basis of the Jñāna-Kanda. The social relations, included in the Hindu religion, are regulated according to the Smṛti texts; but these are based on the Gṛhya-Sūtras. There are many Sūtra-treatises besides the Gṛhya-Sūtras; but they have nothing to do with Ethics; and deal only with the various Metaphysical speculations started in order to solve the Riddle of the Universe. These Metaphysical speculations, are called the Śaḍ-Darśanas. The Nyāya-Sūtras of

Gautama, the Vaiśeṣika-Sūtras, the Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā-Sūtras of Jaiminī, the Vedānta-Sūtras or the Brahma-Sūtras of Bādarāyaṇa, the Yoga-Sūtras of Patañjali etc., are included in the Sad-Darśanas. But there are many Sūtra-treatises, besides the Sad-Darśana; and the Panini-Sūtras, the Śāṇḍilya-Sūtras, the Nārada-Sūtras etc., are included. among them. The Purāṇas came into existence, when the ancient Vedic religion, which did not contain idol-worship, and which was purely Metaphysical in its aspect, was changed, and the worshipping of deities came into vogue. The Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyaṇa are not Purāṇas, but are historical treatises. The various Gītās are included in the Purāṇas. This subject-matter has been discussed in the Gītā-Rahasya as occasion arose; but this information has been given below in the form of a list, in order that readers should have complete information about them collected in one place:—

### **(1) THE VEDAS AETD THE SRUTI TREATISES:**

Karma-kāṇḍa or Yajña-kāṇḍa

The Saṃhitās (i.e., the collection of Ṛcās or Mantras)

The Brahmanas (Āraṇyakas)

Jñāna-kāṇḍa

The Upaniṣads

## **(2) ŚĀSTRAS:**

(1) Scriptures: Gṛhya-Sūtras, Smṛti treatises (Manu; Yājñavalkya, and Hārīta.)

(2) Sūtras: (Sad-Darśanas) , Jaimini-, (vyavasāyātmikā-or Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā); Brahma-, (Vedānta-, Śārīraka-, or Uttara-Mīmāṃsā); Nyāya-(Gautama); Yoga-(Pātañjala), Sāṃkhya-, Vaiśeṣika-(Sāṃkhya-Kārikā).

## **(3) OTHER SŪTRAS:**

Vyakarana-Sūtras (Pāṇinī); Treatises relating to the Path of Devotion (Nārada, Śāṇḍilya).

## **(4) HISTORY:**

Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, (Harivaṃśa).

## **(5) PURĀṆAS:**

Mahāpurāṇas, Upapurāṇas, and Gītās.

These include 18 Mahāpurāṇas, 18 Upapurāṇas, and the various Gītās.

The different Veda-, Smṛti- and Purana-treatises, referred to in the Gītā-Rahasya are mentioned in the following list: –

### **VEDAS:–**

Atharva, Ṛk.

### **SAMHITĀS:–**

Taittirīya, Vājasaneyī, Manu, Sūta.

### **BRĀHMAṆAS:–**

Ārṣeya, Aitarīya, Kauṣika, Kauṣītakī, Taittirīya, Śatapatha,

### **UPANIṢADS:–**

Aitareya, Amṛtabindu, Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Chāndogya, Churikā, Dhyāna-bindu, Garbha, Gopālatāpanī, Īśā (Īśāvāsyā), Jābāla-Saṁnyāsa, Kaivalya, Kaṭha, Kauṣītakī (Kau. Brāhmaṇa), Kena, Mahānārāyaṇa, Maitrī (Maitrāyaṇī), Muṇḍaka (Muṇḍa) Māṇḍūkya, Nārāyaṇīya, Nṛsimhottara-tāpanīya, Praśna. Rāmapūrva (tāpanī), Sarva, Śvetāśvatara, Taittirīya, Vajrasūci, Yogataa,

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### **SMṚTIS:–**

Manu, Yājñavalkya, Hārīta.

### **SŪTRAS:–**

Āpastamba, Āśvalāyana, Baudhāyana-Dharma, Baudhāyana -  
Gr̥hya, Brahma-(Vedānta-, Śārīraka-), Gr̥hyaśeṣa, Gautama-  
Nyāya, Gobhilagr̥hya, Mīmāṃsā, Nārada, Nārada-Pañcarātra,  
Pātañjala-Yoga, Śaṇḍilya, Śārīraka (Brahma-, Vedānta-),  
Taittirīya, Vedānta (Brahma-, Śārīraka-).

### **KĀRIKĀS:**

Sāṃkhya-Kārikā.

### **VYĀKARAṆA:–**

Pāṇinī.

### **HISTORIES:–**

Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata (Harivaṃśa).

### **PURĀṆAS:–**

Agni, Bhāgavata, Brahmāṇḍa, Devībhāgavata, Gaṇeśa, Garuḍa,  
Gauḍīya-Padmottara, Harivaṃśa, Liṅga, Mārkaṇḍeya, Matsya,  
Nārada, Kūrma, Nṛsimha. Padma, Skanda, Varāha, Viṣṇu,

### **GĪTĀS:–**



Avadhūta, Aṣṭāvakra, Brahma, Bodhya, Bhikṣu, Devī, Gaṇeśa, Haṁsa, Hari, Hārīta, Īśvara, Kapila, Maṅki, Pāṇḍava, Parāśara, Piṅgala, Rāma, Saṁpāka, Śiva, Sūrya, Sūta, Uttara, Vyāsa, Vicikhyu, Vṛtra, Yama.

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### **PĀLI TEXTS:**

Amitāyusutta, Brahmajāla-sutta, Brāhmaṇa-dhamikā, Cullavagga, Dhammapada, Daśaratha-jataka, Dīpavaṁśa, Mahāparinibbāṇa-sutta, Mahāvaṁśa, Milinda-Praśna, Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka. Sela-sutta, Suttanipāta. Sabbāsava-sutta. Saundarānanda, Tārānātha, Tevijja-sutta ((Traividya-Sutra), Theragāthā, Udāna, Vaththugāthā.

—:O: —

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## **GLORSARY Of Important Terminological Expressions.**

**A**

abhyāsa, repetition; continued practice.

ācāra, conduct.

ācāra-saṁgraha, code of conduct.

ādhibhautika, Material; Materialistic.

ādhidaivika, Intuitional.

adhikāra, authority; qualification according to inherent natural qualities.

adhyātma, Metaphysics; the Highest Ātman.

ādhyātmika, Metaphysical; relating to the Absolute Self.

adhyavasāya, discriminating decision, (see, vyavasāya).

adṛṣṭa, Accumulated Action, which is invisible (also called, apūrva).

advaita, Non-Dual.

advaitavāda, Non-Dualism.

ahaṁkāra. Individuation; Egoism;

ahiṁsā, Harmlessness; Non-violence.

ajñāna, Ignorance.

amṛta, Release; sphere of deities; immortality; sacrifice-remnant food; Fundamental Substance; the Brahman;

amṛtatva, Immortality.

anādi; eternal,

ānanda, Beatitude, -maya, beatific. -mayakośa, beatific envelope.

ananta, endless; eternal.

anārabdha, Uncommenced (Action).

aniruddha, Individuation (same as, ahaṁkāra).

annamaya-kośa, food-envelope.

anubhavādvaita, combination of Knowledge and Action, based on Non-dualism: this is more or less the same as the Desireless Karma-Yoga doctrine (see p.508).

anṛta, invisible, or imperceptible, (the opposite of, satya, Real).

āptavacana, advice of persons in whom one puts faith.

apūrvā, (see, adṛṣṭa above).

ārabdha, Commenced (Action).

ārambha, Commencement.

ārambhavāda, Theory of Commencement, (see, pp.204, 205, 331).

arhat, Perfect being (Buddhistic), (same as, siddha).

ārtam, perishable (same as, vināśī).

arthavāda, statements, which are in the nature of obiter dicta (see pp.31 – 32.)

asambhūti, ignorance, (same as, vināśa , avidyā),

p.117.

asat, unreal, (same as, anṛta).

asi, art (thou), (see, tat-tvam-asi).

asteya, non-stealing.

āsurī, ungodly.

āsurī-saṃpat, ungodly endowment.

ātman, the Self.

ātma-svātantrya, Freedom of Will.

avidyā, Illusion, (same as, Māyā).

avyakta, Imperceptible.

## B

bhakti, devotion.

bhaktimārga, the Path of Devotion.

bhakti-yoga, the Yoga of Devotion.

bhāṣya, Commentary, (see, tīkā: see, p.16.).

Brahman, the ultimate Essential Principle, which is the Root-Cause of the Cosmos.

brahmārpaṇa, dedication to the Brahman.

brahma-vṛkṣa, the Brahman-Tree.

buddha, sage; wise man.

buddhi, Reason; the Mind; Desire.

buddhibheda, destroying the conviction of a person.

buddhi-yoga, the Yoga of the Equable Reason.

caturvyūha, the four-fold scheme of the genesis of the world, from Vasudeva (Īśvara) to Saṁkarṣaṇa (jīva), to Pradyumna (manas), to Aniruddha (Individuation), (see, pp.756 – 758).

## C

cetanā, vital activity seen in living beings (see p.194).

cit, or citta, consciousness.

caitanya, that thought-power, which is responsible for activity in gross bodies (see, p.194).

codanā, inspiration.

## D

dātavya, that which it is a duty to give.

daiva, Destiny.

daivī, Godly (opposite of āsurī, ungodly).

daivī-sāmpat, godly endowment,

dayā, kindness; pity.

devata, deity.

devayāna, the path along which the subtle body of a deceased person passes, if the man has died at a particular time, being what is known as the 'lighted path' (śukla-mārga), (see pp.408 – 410).

dharma, a deity; morality; right; duty; religion, (see references given under 'dharma' in Index of Definitions, part I).

dharmādharmā, right and wrong.

dhṛti, that principle of cohesion by which all the various elements of the Body remain steady (see p.195).

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duḥkha, pain; unhappiness. dvaita, Duality.

dvaitādvaita, Dual-non-dualism.

dvaitavāda, Dualism.

**E**

ekāntika, solitudinal.

eṣaṇā, desire, (same as, icchā, vāsanā, saṁga, and kāma).

**G**

gati, goal; path (same as, sṛtī).

gītā, song.

guṇa, constituent; strand; quality.

guṇapariṇāma, the unfolding of the constituents of Prakṛti.

guṇotkarṣa, (same as guṇa-pariṇāma)

## H

hīnayāna, (Buddhistic), the inferior path.

## I

icchā, Desire, (same as eṣāṇā, kāma, vāsanā, saṁga).

icchāsvātantrya, freedom of desire or will (same as ātmasvātāntrya above).

indriya, senses, or organs, gross.

## J

jaḍādvaita, gross, or materialistic non-dualism (see p.219).

jīva, the Personal Self; (same as the embodied Self, or the śarīra-ātman).

jīvātman, (same as, jīva).

jīvanmukta, Released-in-life; birth-released.

jīvanmuktāvasthā, the state of being Released-in-life.

jñā, the Knower.

jñāna. Knowledge; wisdom; Realisation,

jñāna-kāṇḍa, treatises which maintain that the Knowledge of the Brahman is superior to sacrificial ritual.

jñāna-niṣṭhā, the Path of Knowledge.

jñāna-mārga, (same as, jñāna-niṣṭhā)

jñānin, Knowledgeful; sage; wise.

jñātā, Knower.

jñeya, the Knowable.

## K

kaivalya, Isolation.

kāla, Time; death.

kāma, Desire (same as icchā, eṣāṇā, or vāsanā).

kāmya, Desire-prompted. karma, Action.

karma-bhoga, the suffering for Action.

karma-jijñāsā, the desire to know Right Action.

karma-kāṇḍa, ritualistic treatises.

karma-mukti, Release from the effects of Action.

karma-niṣṭha, the Path of Knowledge.

karma-phala, the Fruit of Action.

karmaphala-tyāga, abandonment of the Fruit of Action.

karma-pravāha, the course of Action.

karma-saṁnyāsa, Abandonment of Action,

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karma-tyāga, Abandonment of Action.

karma-vipāka, Causality.

karma-yoga, Union by Right Action.

karma-yogin, one who follows the Path of Karma-Yoga.

karma-yogin-sthitaprajña, the Steady-in-Reason,  
following the Path of Karma-Yoga.  
kārya, duty; product; effect; doable.  
karyākarya, the doable and the not-doable.  
kośa, envelope.  
krama-mukti, gradual release.  
kriyamāṇa, (Action) to-be-per-formed.  
kṛṣṇa, dark; Śrī Kṛṣṇa.  
kṛṣṇa-mārga, the dark path (same as piṭṛyāṇa, and  
opposite of śukla-mārga).  
Kṛṣṇārpaṇa, dedication to Kṛṣṇa.  
kṣamā, forgiveness.

## L

liṅga, subtle.  
liṅga śārīra, subtle-body. loka, world, sphere.  
lokasaṁgraha, cosmic, or universal welfare.

## M

mahāyāna, the superior path (Buddhistic), (the opposite  
of hīnayāna).  
manas, the Mind.  
manaḥpūta, mind-, or conscience sanctioned.  
mānavadharmā, the religion of humanity.  
manodevatā, the mental deity, of Conscience.  
manomaya-kośa, the mental envelope.  
mātrā, the external world.  
mātrā-sparśa, contact with the external world.  
māyā, Illusion.



mithyā, unreal (same as asat).

moha, delusion; confusion.

mokṣa, Release.

mṛtyu, death; mortal sphere.

mukta, Released.

mukti, Release, (same as mokṣa).

## N

naimittika, occasional (Action).

naiṣkarmya, abstinence from Action; desireless Action.

naiṣkarmya-siddhi, Release by abstinence from Action,  
or by Desireless Action.

nāma-rūpa, Name and Form.

nāmarūpātmaka, Name-d and Form-ed.

nānātva, diversity; manifoldness.

niragni, one who does not maintain a sacrificial fire.

nirāśa, freedom from hope; despair.

nirāśavādī, Pessimist, (opposite of āśāvādī)

nirguṇa, qualityless.

nirguṇa-bhakti, worship of the Qualityless.

nirvaira, non-inimical.

nirvana, final emancipation; Release.

niṣkāma, desireless.

nissaṅga, unattached.

niṣṭhā, the ultimate state.  
nitya, daily (Action or ritual).  
nitya-saṁnyāsin, perpetual ascetic.

## P

pañca-mahābhūta, five Primordial Elements.  
pañcīkaraṇa, union of fire primeval elements.  
paramāṇuvāda, theory of atoms; atomic theory.  
paramārtha, the highest interest.  
paramātman, the Highest Self (same as the adhyātman).  
parārtha, other's-interest.  
pātañjala-yoga, the system of Yoga enunciated by Patañjali.  
phala, Fruit.  
phalāśā, Hope for Fruit (of Action).  
phalāśā-tyāga, abandonment of Hope for Fruit (of Action).  
piṇḍa, the Body.  
pitṛyāṇa, the dark path, (see p.408 etc.)  
poṣaṇa, Divine dispensation, or pleasure.  
prākṛta, vernacular; with Prakṛti.  
prakṛti, Nature; Matter; inherent quality or temperament.  
pralaya, Cosmic destruction.  
pramāda, forgetfulness of duty, or heedlessness.  
pramāṇa, measure.  
prameya, measurable,  
prāṇa, life.

prārambha, commencement.  
prārabdha, Commenced (Action),  
prasthāna-trayī, the three fundamental treatises of the  
Vedic religion, dealing with the paths of Action and of  
Inaction, namely the Upaniṣads, the Vedānta-Sūtras,  
and the Bhagavadgītā.  
pratijā, a vow.  
pratijā-pālana, observance of a vow.  
pratīka, a symbol.  
pravṛtti, Activity; inclination.  
pravṛtti-mārga, Path of Action.  
pravṛtti-svātantrya, freedom of activity (or Will), (same  
as, ātma-svātantrya).  
pṛthaktva, individuality;  
puruṣa, Spirit.  
puruṣārtha, ideals of manhood.  
puruṣottama, the Highest Spirit.  
puṣṭi, divine pleasure (same as poṣaṇa)  
puṣṭi-mārga, the Path of Divine Pleasure.

## R

rāga, liking; love; pleasure.  
rāja, king.  
rajas, the passionate or active constituent, out of the  
three constituents of Prakṛti.  
rājasa, passionate; active; progressive.  
rāja-guhya, the King of Mysticisms.

rāja-vidyā, the King of Sciences.

S

**sadasadviveka, discrimination between right and wrong.**

sadasadviveka-buddhi, the Reason, which discriminates between the right and the wrong.

sadasadviveka-devatā, the deity which discriminates between the right and the wrong; Conscience.

samatā, equability.

samatva-buddhi, equable Reason.

samatva-buddhi-yoga, the Yoga of the equable Reason.

sambhūti, Knowledge, which is the fundamental cause of the world (see p.501); (opp. of asambhūti, above).

saṁcaya, accumulation.

saṁcita, Accumulated (Karma).

saṁga (saṅga). Desire, (same as, icchā, eṣāṇā, or vāsanā); Attachment.

saṁghāta, collection; aggregate (same as, samuccaya below).

saṁgraha, collection; protection; maintenance; regulation; welfare, (see loka-saṁgraha above).

saṁhāra, destruction.

saṁkalpa, the mental decision that a particular thing is of a particular kind.

sāṁkhya, counters; the followers of the Sāṁkhya philosophy.

saṁnyāsa, Renunciation; asceticism; the 'nyāsa', or giving up of Desire-prompt-ed Action (cf. Gī. 18.2).  
saṁnyāsin, an ascetic; a renouncer; one who follows the Path of Renunciation.

saṁpat. endowment (see daivī saṁpat, and āsurī saṁpat) above).

saṁsāra, worldly life; worldly activity.

samuccaya, collection (same as saṁghāta).

sāmya, (same as, samatā equability.

śānti, tranquility.

śarīra. the Body (same as piṇḍa).

śarīra-ātman, the embodied Self.

sarvabhūtaḥita, universal welfare; same as, loka-saṁgraha).

śāstra, science.

satkāryavāda, (see p.210), the doctrine that something must come out of some other thing, and that the fundamental cause of an evolute must possess the qualities of the evolute in some form or other.

sattāsāmānya, pervasiveness; existing in a constant form in everything.

sattāsāmānyatva, the theory of constant pervasiveness.

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sattva, the placid, equable, and pure, out of the three constituents of Prakṛti.

sāttvika, possessing the sattva quality.

satya, reality; real; existence.

satyāṅṛta, Reality, and Un-reality.

satyāṅṛtaviveka, the discrimination between what is eternally existent, and what is not.

siddha, perfect, released (same as, mukta).

siddhāvasthā, the state of perfection.

smārta, following the path laid down by the Smṛtis.

smārta-karma, ritual ordained by the Smṛtis.

smārta-yajña, sacrifice prescribed by the Smṛtis.

sneha, attachment (same as, saṅga).

sparśa, contact (see mātṛā-sparśa).

ṣṛtī, path, or goal (same as, gati).

śṛti, that which was heard.

sthitaprajña, Steady-in-Reason.

sthūla, gross (opp. of sūkṣma below).

śuddha, pure.

śuddhādvaita, pure non-dualism.

śuddha vāsanā, pure desire.

sukha, happiness (opp. of duḥkha).

sukhavāda, the theory of happiness.

śukla-mārga, the lighted path (opp. of kṛṣṇa-mārga).

sūkṣma, subtle (opp. of sthūla, above).

sūkṣma śarīra, the subtle body.

svadharma, own-religion; own-duty.

svādhyaḥ, following the religion prescribed for one's status in life (of. Gī. 16. 1).

svārtha, own-interest (opp. parārtha).

## T

tamas, ignorance; darkness, the inert, out of the three constituents of Prakṛti.

tāmasī, inert; ignorant; dark.

tanmātra, fine element.

tapas, religious austerity.

tat, THAT.

tatva, element.

tat-tvam-asi, THOU ART THAT.

trayī-dharma. the religious sacrificial paths prescribed by the three Vedas.

trayī-vidyā, same as, trayī-dharma, above.

triguṇa, three constituents, or strands.

triguṇātmaka, three-constituted.

triguṇātīta, beyond the three constituents.

trivṛtkaraṇa, union of three elements.

ṛṣṇā, Desire (same as kāma, vāsanā).

tuṣṭi, contentedness.

tyāga, abandonment; abandonment of the Fruit of Action (see Gī. 18.2).

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## V

varṇāśarma-dharma, the Smṛti arrangement of four classes, and four stages of life.

vāsanā, Desire, (same as icchā; tṛṣṇā).

vāsanā-svāntarya, freedom of desire, (same as ātma-svāntarya).

vāsanātmaka, based on desire; Practical (Reason).

vastutatva, the Fundamental Element, the Thing-in-itself; ding an sich.

videha-mukti, the Release, after death, by reaching the sphere of the Brahman (see p.412).

vidyā, science.

vighasa, food remaining over after everybody has eaten (see p.403).

vikalpa, the mental decision that a particular thing is not of a particular kind.

vikṛti, evolute,(same as vikāra).

vināśa, ignorance (same as avidyā or asambhūti, see p.501).

viśeṣa, the five primeval elements.

viśiṣṭādvaita, Qualified Monism (see p.21).

vyakta, perceptible.

vyavasāya, discrimination.

vyavasāyātmaka, discriminating, and deciding; Pure (Reason.).

## Y

yāga, sacrifice, minor than yajña.

yajña, sacrifice.



yoga, union, merger; assimilation; the device of skilful performance of Action (see Gī. 2.50).

yoga-bhraṣṭa, one fallen from Yoga.

yoga-śāstra, the science of Yoga.

yoga-sūtras, the canons dealing with Yoga.

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**END OF VOLUME II**